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VOL. I

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CONTENTS

Between War and Socialism 335
By Bernhard Buchholz

Background of Spain's Civil War 345
By Bertram D. Wolfe

Leading Principles of Marxism: A Restatement 356
By Karl Korsch

Changes in Types of Monopoly 379
By G. Reimann

The Costs of Depression 384
By Lewis Corey

The Railroad Strikes of 1885-86 394
By Harry Frumerman

A Metaphysics for the Movies 406
By Meyer Schapiro

Dr. Johnson and the Old Order 418
By Stuart Gerry Brown

CHRONICLES AND DISCUSSION

The Bourgeois Origins of Nominalism
By Edward Conze 431

A Note on the Question of "Class Science"
By Eliseo Vivas 437

On Marxism and Morality
By Mortimer Taube 446

REVIEWS OF BOOKS

The Sociology of Knowledge
By Sidney Hook 450

Mr. Hogben Against Mathematics
By William Gruen 455

The Patrons of Revolutionary Art
By Meyer Schapiro 462

Discussion *By Bertram D. Wolfe*

Philosophy and Physics
By Jim Cork 470

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Between War and Socialism

BY BERNHARD BUCHHOLZ

Nazi Germany, now in the fifth year of its existence, still offers baffling problems to students of politics and economics. The numerous theories advanced to explain the Nazi Party's spectacular rise to power and the actual policy and tendencies of the Third Reich are hard to classify and sometimes more obscure than actual events. They become clear, however, if one considers the National Socialism of the Nazis as an effort to solve the crisis of capitalism by means of rearmament and war and as an alternative to socialism.

Nationalism, Capitalist Industry and War

There is no doubt that nationalism, in the widest sense of the word, was a progressive force during the nineteenth century, but it has since become a stumbling block of civilization. This leaves only one conclusion: that nationalism, generally speaking, is today essential to maintain capitalism, in whatever form, and that the majority of the peoples of the world still believe, whether by tradition or by education, in nationalism. The historical paradox is obvious. Never before were the leading capitalist countries economically so ripe for socialism, but the general trend of political developments moves backward to nationalism and, what is most important, does so by force of the fact that private capital can defend itself only on a national basis. Capital was born a national force, acted and accumulated on a national basis and must remain national.

There were no political factors in post-war Germany able to use the forces of material industrial development to bring about socialism. German capitalism was permitted to strengthen the forces upholding the prevailing state of affairs and to try once more to solve all problems on a national basis. The Nazi Party provided no clear-cut principles or philosophy, no integral program to which it adhered and which it tried to realize. Its only definite slogans were the principle of leadership, the rejection of internationalism, the belief in race as the driving force of human development and the emphasis on military power; in other words the Nazi program was a confession that the problems of the twentieth

century are be solved by another war after the obvious failure of the World War of 1914-18. Not only the many contradictions between original program and actual policy but the constant changes in method justify the conclusion that the Nazi Party came to power rather by force of circumstances than by forethought and planning on the part of Hitler and his lieutenants. At the moment it came to power the party, organized on military lines and backed by only a large minority of 33% of the people (the general elections under the first wave of Nazi terrorism increased the minority to 44%), had to employ its only definite principle, namely military command in political actions which were conceived as military actions. All other parties had to be suppressed and were crushed because they were politically weak and without means of defense as a result of their particular kind of German democratic principles. The suppression was effected largely by the mere weight of the Nazi Party.

But the crux of the problem became evident when economic questions had to be solved. The outcome of all Nazi activities after more than four years is the totalitarian state, which clearly appears as the necessary consequence of a controlled capitalist economy. Such an economic system, with which we are chiefly concerned in this article, assumes more and more the character of a *Wehrwirtschaft,* a term that defies translation. It is more than the "defense economy" of Great Britain, but less than the "war economy" that was dominant from 1915 to 1918 in Germany, France, Great Britain and, to a certain extent, in the United States. It is an economy prepared for instant mobilization as a whole at a moment's notice, or rather it is intended to be ready for that purpose.

There is no doubt that the need as well as the means for *Wehrwirtschaft* must exist if one of the leading industrial countries inaugurates it as a system and organizes its economy on that basis. Indeed nationalism, modern industry and war are closely linked with one another. War was the most powerful instrument in creating nations. Two striking examples may suffice. The wars deliberately brought about by Bismarck in 1864, 1866 and 1870 against the Danes, the Austrians and the French created the German Empire, while the Civil War of 1861-65 consolidated national unity in the United States. Furthermore, wars were and still are the forcible means used by capitalist imperialism to secure or to enlarge colonies necessary for controlling the raw material resources needed in ever increasing quantities or to safeguard capital invested abroad.

The essentially expansive economic system of capitalism reached, during the second half of the nineteenth century after a relatively short period of development, a decisive obstacle to its further progress, namely the very division into national states, *i.e.* larger territorial economic units, which was formerly necessary to promote capitalist expansion. Still larger territorial economic units were now necessary. The new problem became especially acute in Europe, and the only

progressive solution was a socialist one. The first step toward that solution meant, according to Marx and Engels, a socialist unification of the three most developed countries, Germany, France and Great Britain. (That is something different from the capitalist enlargement of territorial economic units by conquest.) Germany tried an abortive capitalist solution by waging war against France and Britain in order to become predominant on the Continent and to advance economic development along the customary capitalist lines. Germany failed. Since after this obvious failure the socialist solution was tried only in Russia, the least developed country, it became clear that capitalism was left, so to speak, to itself for one more effort at a solution by means of war. As far as Europe is concerned the capitalist countries must prepare for a second round of wars. Once again Germany is the champion, using under Nazi rule all the economic and political experience of the World War.

War and industry today are even more closely linked than nationalism and war. A modern general staff resembles much more the managing board of a large corporation than the military bodies which conducted the battles of the nineteenth century from a convenient hill, following each phase of the combat with the naked eye. There is, further, a notable interplay between industry and war. Modern industry created new weapons of war and modern wars created new products for civilian use as well as new methods of production. Standardized mass production *e.g.* was directly and greatly stimulated by the unprecedented demand for munitions and other war supplies during the World War. This phase of modern industry was almost wholly created in France, Germany and Great Britain during 1915-16, while in the United States the existing mass production methods were developed to enormous proportions. The story of how that was done is too well known; we need not dwell upon it here. It is equally known how the war demand for agricultural products forced the United States and the British Dominions to enlarge the scale of farming and to an increasing use of agricultural machinery. But there is another important point, namely the numerous inventions made during the World War and the utilization of inventions formerly considered commercially unprofitable. (Germany's war needs provided the financial means for employing the expensive method of producing nitrates from the air; but once employed on a large scale it soon became commercially profitable.)

The most important factor in the relations between industry and war today is the dependence of war on industry as a whole, on all the economic resources and productive power of a nation. As there is no longer a clear distinction between "war" industries and "peace" industries, so wars are no longer confined to battles between carefully trained armies but have become actions in which the whole population participates. These facts must be mentioned here although they are common knowledge. Their direct bearings are of the highest im-

portance, especially when one tries to explain what is going on in Germany. The first point is that war today cannot be conducted without the entire nation being organized for war. The nation has to be trained as formerly only an army, or a select body of men, was trained. Moreover, the World War showed that the period of free capital movement and free trade made industrial countries dependent on the import of raw materials, which are soon exhausted when war disrupts international trade routes. Especially in the case of Germany, which is without foreign dependencies, war needs demand the production of substitutes for imported raw materials. This in turn requires a vast organization and control of industry. Hence industrial development can no longer be allowed to continue freely. Uncontrolled industry moves along the line of the highest possible profits, and that motive persists under fascism. So the state must guarantee profits to controlled industries either by tariffs and subsidies or by regulating wages on a very low level. The latter method is the most feasible and requires a special organization to control the masses of workers.

Needless to say a democratic system is unable to create this organization without violating democratic principles, or rather, without destroying the very basis of democracy in free and independent organizations. Independent trade unions and independent employers' associations are especially incompatible with this kind of state controlled organization of economic activity. In the political field the same needs are prevalent. Free democratic parties, free speech and free press, and particularly the socialist movement, must no longer exist. Indeed the World War showed clearly that democracy must be suspended or reduced to a shadow of its former self. All the war organization and control did not create cooperative or socialized industry, although there was much talk of War Socialism in Germany. The phrase was speedily abandoned when Germany's population began to starve while industrial profits reached unprecedented heights.

The national capitalism of Europe prolonged its existence because of the failure of the various socialist movements in Germany (we are here not explaining this failure but simply stating the fact). That drives capitalism with increasing speed to a solution of the burning problem of unifying Europe by means of war. But the task is infinitely more complex than it was in the years before 1914. The number of national states is greater while the preparations are more intricate and incomparably more costly, thus drawing more heavily on the financial resources of the nations. The speed of modern communications and war transport and the efficiency of modern weapons all demand a short and decisive war because of the immense destruction and disruption they wreak. And that makes it necessary to achieve the highest possible degree of preparedness. Here are the real causes of recent happenings in Germany, and of its political and economic development.

Rejecting the Socialist Solution

Is Germany's economy, controlled by the Nazi Party, moving willingly or unwillingly in the direction of socialism? If it were, it could be assumed that it would grow. In that case we would have to admit that Marxism, whether orthodox or reformist, was entirely wrong in maintaining that socialism could be brought about only by independent action of the working class. But there is no socialism in Germany.

When Hitler came to power the outstanding feature of Germany's economy was a nearly bankrupt agriculture, which nevertheless provided a surprisingly large part of the total foodstuffs consumed in this highly developed industrial country. Agriculture was bankrupt in spite of protective tariffs, of large subsidies and of repeated remission of interest on loans. For years past money had been poured into the big estates comprising 37.9% of the land but only 1.1% of the total number of farms. The credit and other cooperative institutions of the peasants were disorganized and modern methods of standardized production and marketing organizations were only slightly developed. State aid to agriculture was matched by still greater aid to industry and control over its activity. Railways were completely nationalized, although under the Dawes Plan they were run on the lines of private business enterprise. The coal mining industry was nearly 20% nationalized. Light and power production as well as water supply were operated almost 100% by municipalities. Urban transport, *i.e.* tramways, etc., was almost without exception owned by local communities. Like agriculture, the iron and steel industry benefited by protective tariffs. The steadily growing oil and oil refinery industry was under special protection. From the viewpoint of organization Germany provided the example of an economy organized by trusts, syndicates and cartels to a higher degree than in any other country. Some syndicates were even compulsory, *e.g.* the coal and potash syndicates. Employers' associations were as numerous and as well organized as the trade unions, which played an important part in regulating wages and working conditions. The inauguration of industrial arbitration in post-war years called forth a formidable machinery which did much to stimulate organization. Consumers' cooperatives were fairly well developed and increased steadily. The middle classes, including the peasants, small shopkeepers and artisans, had also built up an extensive system of cooperative organizations for the supply of raw materials and for credit purposes. The lower level of wages compared with the United States and with Great Britain was partly compensated by an extensive system of social insurance not matched by any other capitalist country.

But one important point must not be overlooked. The exhaustion of economic resources, especially the destruction of capital caused by the World War, made

it necessary to borrow foreign capital on a large scale. This was obtainable only by paying very high interest. So a substantial part of German profits went into foreign countries instead of being invested either in German industry or as German capital in other countries. Business naturally tried to make good this loss by decreasing wages. But that did not solve the problem. Here lies the real grievance about the Treaty of Versailles, which limited the accumulation of new capital and was constantly held up to workers when they demanded higher wages or shorter hours.

The havoc wrought by the economic crisis of the 1930's is easily understood from this general outline of the situation. By 1932 industrial activity had fallen to 61% of 1929. While agricultural production increased, the cash income in agriculture decreased to 64% of the 1929 income. The permanent mass unemployment, another feature of post-war capitalism, ranged in Germany up to roughly 2,500,000. At the bottom of the slump, in the winter of 1931, unemployment rose to roughly 8,000,000. The crisis, however, added new elements of organization to an already highly organized capitalism, *e.g.* exchange control, necessitated by the financial crisis and control of foreign trade (especially in agricultural products). In short this crisis not only demanded a different solution from other cyclical crises but offered two alternative solutions.

Let us first examine the solution which was not acted upon. In this connection we must first consider the agricultural situation. The production of cereals, especially wheat, barley and oats, and of oilseeds and wool, had become unprofitable. It may be noted that the big estates concentrated on the production of those products. The only possible profitable solution, therefore, was to abandon this part of agricultural production or to allow it only in parts of Germany where conditions were favorable. But this action presupposed nationalization of the land and cooperative organization of the peasants, followed by a more even distribution of land according to the needs of modern agriculture and concentration of production on dairy products, meat, poultry, vegetables and fruits with the help of duty-free imported agricultural raw materials, *i.e.* overseas staple products. In industry itself nationalization of the key industries was necessary inasmuch as the state was repeatedly compelled to take over the shares of big companies in order to restore their finances. In the distribution trades and among the artisans cooperation had made promising steps, which offered a good foothold for further development. Banking, already heavily subsidized by the state, needed only more concentration on generalized lines. The private ownership of finance and industrial capital would then have had to stand the test of effective competition by nationalized and cooperative production. This, in short, is the outline of the socialist solution of the German economic crisis.

The Fascist Solution of Rearmament and War

The alternative was the nationalist solution which finally was acted upon. Germany provides a striking example of the fact that the very foundation of socialist economy is nationalization of the land. To cite Marx in this connection, it may be useful to point out that he clearly proved that agriculture, based more or less on peasant and feudal or semi-feudal ownership of the land, cannot properly be developed into scientific capitalist production. Even tenant farming cannot make full use of modern methods of production, although cooperative production under capitalist conditions provides a temporary outlet. Marx therefore deemed it necessary even for a capitalist government to nationalize the land in order to give both capital and wage labor the opportunity to use the land as they had learned to use the elements of production in industry. But he added that it was doubtful whether a capitalist government would dare to nationalize the land. The first nationalization of the land in modern history took place, in fact, in Russia under a socialist government. It is obvious that nationalization of the land whets the appetite for more nationalization. Yet we must add that this problem takes different shapes according to the economic traditions of different countries. There is no patent solution. But a mere glance at modern economic conditions clearly reveals the enormous contradictions between agriculture and industry. As far as Germany is concerned it may be gathered from this diversion into the Marxist analysis of capitalism that the non-socialist solution safeguards private property in land and excludes international cooperation in agricultural production, *i.e.* the importing of agricultural products from regions where they can be produced cheaply. This policy must aim at self-sufficiency, one of the key points of the program of the Nazi Party. It was adopted from the big landowners who had long clamored for it and who vigorously waged a new campaign to achieve it in 1928. This lasted until Hitler came to power and made it the fundamental principle of the Third Reich. Self-sufficiency, in order to save private ownership of land, was at the same time a most attractive slogan for the German peasants who were completely ruled by the powerful organizations of the big landowners, the Prussian Junkers who once played the decisive part in German politics. Hence the peasants, too, readily flocked to the Nazi Party. In fact they were the backbone of that party. The peasants were also convinced that exclusion of foreign products would bring the good old days of prosperity. Fortunately for Hitler the German Republic, especially under Chancellors Bruening and von Papen, had built up an almost complete system of protective tariffs. Hitler simply completed it as he had pledged to do. By the summer of 1933 the system of agricultural protection had been extended to the last agricultural product. The direct result was a jump

in prices. It subsequently needed complete control of foreign trade, the abolition of commodity markets and a new organization of the peasants to enforce the regulation of agricultural production down to the smallest detail. Finally, the curious law of the hereditary farm came into force; there has never been a more rigid law to safeguard for "eternity" the private ownership of land.

The outcome of this solution has been contrary to all the hopes of the Nazi Party. First of all, Germany is still dependent on foreign agricultural products, for production on the farms has not increased substantially. Moreover, to increase the scope of extensive agricultural production, *e.g.* oilseeds and sheep breeding, requires vast territories that Germany cannot provide within its present boundaries despite all land improvements and land reclamation work. The general increase of prices impaired dairy farming and the production of meat and poultry. Finally, the Third Reich is compelled, in the fifth year of its existence, to import considerable quantities of wheat. Germany has lost the boisterously acclaimed self-sufficiency in cereals, which besides was achieved before Hitler came to power. But self-sufficiency was not only intended to safeguard private ownership of land; it was also meant to serve the war purpose of avoiding starvation during the next war. This policy taken as a whole is the direct opposite of a socialist agricultural economy. And it leaves German agriculture as unremunerative as it was before Hitler, sustained only by extensive subsidies. Surely there is no sign of socialism in German agriculture.

To abolish unemployment the Hitler government simply enlarged already existing public works, *i.e.* road making, house building, improvement and reclamation of land. As a result unemployment declined rapidly, but not in industries unaffected by public works. It must not be forgotten that the Nazi Party had no public works plan whatever; it was called a plan only because of the widespread belief that "planned" public works would remedy unemployment and it was at the same time a formidable propaganda slogan. By the spring of 1934 it was impossible to provide further financial means for the kind of public works which did not supply industry with large orders for materials. A new economic crisis developed due mainly to the agricultural policy and the deep distrust of the government economic program in industrial circles.

A remedy had to be found and the program of rearmament, hitherto pursued irresolutely because of differences between the Reichswehr and Hitler's storm-troopers, was necessarily given first place. It is clear from what we said about the relations between war and industry that rearmament provided the Nazi regime with the "planning" element so eagerly sought for. A general staff that has to organize a new army, air force and navy operates with facts concerning man power, barracks, uniforms, foodstuffs, rifles, guns, airplanes, fortresses and so on. Any such program is veritably a "plan" affecting the whole of industry. To be sure, it has nothing to do with socialist planning; on the

contrary it unavoidably turns out to be largely a plan for decreasing the standard of living. Clearly military planning is now paramount in Germany.

There is no difficulty in understanding why financial resources had to be concentrated into one hand and why foreign trade had to be completely controlled for purposes of large-scale rearmament. This kind of planning, once established, is bound to encroach on more and more branches of industry. Substitutes must be produced for imported materials, *e.g.* textile fibres, oil and rubber, even copper and other metals. The state must guarantee profits because most of the substitutes are more expensive than the natural overseas products. Research must be organized to determine what amount of those products are necessary and available for war. Since, moreover, Germany is still measurably dependent on foreign raw materials, foreign trade must be controlled and directed to countries which may possibly become allies. Other countries must be sought which, when conquered, may replenish the exhausted stores of raw materials. Modern warfare requires the removal of exposed factories to districts safer from aerial attacks than the old ones. This, in brief, are the general principles and methods, supplemented necessarily by "planned" direction of man power, skilled workers and training of workers, of the system of *Wehrwirtschaft*. When war breaks out it will be converted into a "war economy" proper.

Turning from economics to politics raises the problem of how a dictatorial one-party regime provides by political necessity the elements of economic organization and control. It was noticed very early in Nazi Germany that relatively large parts of industry, especially those interested in export goods, opposed the Nazi regime because of its policy of agricultural self-sufficiency but were unable to enforce reversal of a policy which impaired foreign markets. After the political parties which formerly pursued a policy opposed to self-sufficiency were dissolved, economic as well as political opposition began to rally again in business organizations such as employers' associations, chambers of commerce and even cartels. A prolonged struggle directed against several hundred independent business organizations began in the summer of 1933. Resistance was broken piecemeal until finally a cumbrous organization emerged which sometimes figures as a corporative system after the Italian model, sometimes as a system based upon the principle of medieval guilds. Yet on closer scrutiny it is nothing more than the principle of leadership applied to economic organization. Formerly independent organizations were concentrated and turned into excellent instruments of control. But this conversion was enforced originally by the political necessity of suppressing opposition.

The final formation of an agricultural organization was much easier because support from these quarters was stronger. Existing agricultural organizations were united and concentrated in one body. Curiously enough the economic organizations of the urban middle classes, of artisans and small shopkeepers,

tried to resist concentration as long as possible in spite of the political support they gave to the new regime.

With regard to trade unions the Nazis held very confused and contradictory opinions. They thought it possible to carry on with the unions by removing the socialist leaders. This they did in May 1933. That was in line with the same general policy and needs of the new regime: economic organizations must not be allowed to become gathering points for political opposition. But the Nazis did not realize that trade unions are essentially democratic organizations. They learned this lesson when the members who could offer no resistance dwindled away after the principle of leadership had been imposed. The only remedy was compulsory membership. But that could not revive the unions. They remained a body without life because their main object, the regulation of wages and working conditions, was dealt with by decree or individually by the managing boards or private industrialists. Under a system that fixes wages over long periods and prohibits strikes there is certainly no room for trade unions. The "German Labor Front" exists mainly through its special organization, "Strength Through Joy." It leaves the workers altogether without an economic organization proper. Corporatively including the new Employers' Association in the Labor Front undoubtedly increased its revenues, but even a factory house party organized by the Labor Front, compelling employer and worker to "sit at one table," is scarcely more than a travesty of socialism. The organization replacing the former trade unions and employers' associations is by no means completed. It changes constantly and adapts itself, under the control of the Nazi Party, to particular purposes whenever there is need, *e.g.* imposing special levies, collecting waste material, quenching smoldering unrest in this or that part of industry. It plays an important part in adjusting the reserves of skilled labor and in the training of young workers. Yet conservative estimates reveal that the Labor Front employs more than 500,000 officials and costs 2,000 million marks yearly.

So a political party with no fixed program apart from nationalism and safeguarding ownership of land and all forms of capitalist property—a party, moreover, organized on military principles to defend the interests of capitalism (meaning, of course, the general interests of capitalism, which are not always equivalent to the interests or wishes of any particular capitalist) backed only by a large minority of the people—was forced by political needs, and by the all-important necessity of rearmament and war, to "organize" capitalism without taking one step in the direction of socialism; although admittedly some of its supporters and leaders were genuinely convinced that they were moving in the direction of "socialism," whatever they might have understood by that term. That party's system of *Wehrwirtschaft* is not a special kind of socialism, it is the opposite of socialism, the effort to solve the crisis of capitalism by rearmament and war as the alternative to socialism.

Background of Spain's Civil War

BY BERTRAM D. WOLFE

Spain, even more than most lands, refuses to yield its secrets to abstract analysis conceived in terms of the generalities common to all modern European countries. The past rises on both sides and takes up arms in a twentieth-century conflict: on the rebel side the Carlists and the Moors; on the government side the Basques. Anarchism plays a role here that is unique in the history of the world. Present events and the perspectives of the future can be understood only if the peculiarities of Spanish development are kept in mind: exceptional history, traditions, psychology and institutions. It is the purpose of this article to examine some of these features of Spanish socio-economic and historical development for the light they may throw on the Spanish civil war.

Spain and Modern Capitalism

One of the most backward lands of Europe,[2] Spain was nevertheless the first country to lay the foundations of modern capitalism. If we take national unification and the development of absolute monarchy as the political test of this assertion we find that such unification was achieved in Spain, under Ferdinand and Isabella, somewhat earlier than in England, two centuries before France and four centuries before Germany. If we take the development of heresies as the primitive ideological banner of nascent capitalism we find that the Albigensian heresy, one of the earliest of this type in Europe, had its seat in Catalonia, which then included Northeastern Spain and Provence, which today belongs to France.[3]

If we take the Renaissance spirit and knowledge as the basis of the lay culture of capitalism, here too we find Spain taking an early lead. Indeed, Spain (for

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1 This is the first of two articles, the second of which, *Revolution and Counter-Revolution in Spain,* will appear in an early issue.

2 Unless otherwise indicated all the generalizations in this article are based upon the condition of Spain up to the outbreak of the present civil war, and ignore the express-train speed with which historical development is accelerated by even brief periods of war and revolution.

3 Catalonian is still spoken in much of the corresponding region of Southern France and linguistically is really a Languedoc dialect and not a variant of Spanish at all.

all its arrested medievalism today) was never as truly a land of medievalism as was the rest of Western Europe. The Visigoths, the barbarians that overran the Iberian peninsula, were the most Romanized of all the Germanic tribes, for they had spent long periods on the borders of the Empire and within other Roman provinces before they crossed the Pyrenees. During the eighth century the Moorish invasion brought with it elements of the Greco-Roman culture that had been preserved in Byzantium and the Empire of the East, after Rome itself had long been under barbarian sway. Under the Arab regime Cordoba in time became the cultural center of Europe, a beautiful town of 200,000 houses, 600 mosques, 900 baths, piped water, paved streets and all the loveliness of a softened oriental splendor. It became too a busy mart of commerce, a center of handicraft industry, a university town where intellectual tolerance, skepticism and rationalism flourished when those things were unheard of throughout the rest of Europe, a focal center where Persian, Babylonian, Egyptian, Grecian, Roman, Byzantine and Christian cultures merged and fructified each other, the point where medicine and mathematics (Arabic numerals, the zero, the local value of numbers, algebra), classical philosophy and jurisprudence and certain elements of poetry and rhetoric entered or reentered Europe. It is from Cordoba that in the tenth and eleventh centuries a philosophical renascence spread to the European university towns where it provided the foundations for the medieval philosophy of the Schoolmen.

Again, if we take as the index of the development of conditions favorable to capitalist growth the expansion of Europe overseas, here too Spain led Europe with an early start and a phenomenal expansion of its energy, its institutions and its culture, which even today leave their mark on such far-flung regions as Mexico, Central and South America, North Africa and the Philippines. The year 1492 was a fateful year in Spain's history, and through it in the history of the modern world. On January 2 Granada, the last Moorish stronghold, fell into the hands of the Christian sovereigns: thereby the national unification of Spain was completed. On March 30 the Jews were expelled from Spain by royal decree. On April 17 Columbus was authorized to seek land and subjects and precious metals and commercial gain and a new route to the Indies via the Western ocean. That voyage created modern Europe.

World Power—and Decline

It is impossible to overestimate the stirring effect of the voyage of Columbus upon the mind and imagination of Europe. It upset all the learning and established beliefs of the day: revolutionized the conceptions prevailing in geography, geology, biology, history and theology. European economy and navigation escaped at last from that inland sea which had been the center of trade and cultural exchange and rivalry and conquest for so many centuries. Islam no

longer blocked it at both ends. Europe expanded with such explosive force that the medieval world collapsed, while the country which had organized that enterprise became for a time almost the ruler of the world.

With the expansion of his horizon and his economy, the European suddenly acquired a sense of liberation and boundless power: thereby was born a new European, a new type of man, the Renaissance man. What is so often forgotten today, is that the prototype of this Renaissance man was the Spaniard of the sixteenth century.

The sixteenth-century Spaniard was a cosmopolitan: he had fought in Italy, Germany and Flanders; he had discovered and conquered strange countries and Empires of legendary wonder; he had founded cities and kingdoms in the far corners of the earth; he was at home in Lima, in Mexico City, in Rome, Brussels, Milan and Manila, as much as in Valencia, Barcelona, Lisbon or Seville. Audacity, enterprise, initiative, strength and valor, adventurousness, confidence, pride and presumption, these were "type" characteristics of the sixteenth-century Spaniard. Had he not vanquished Islam, the scourge and menace of Christian Europe for centuries? Had he not with a few ships and a handful of bold men conquered the unknown seas under Columbus, the Aztec empire under Cortez and the might of the Incas under Pizarro? High minded and strong, capable of austerity and sacrifice without measure, yet keenly alive to luxury, grandeur, beauty, voluptuousness and power, was not this the Renaissance man that was later to inspire Marlowe's plays and Sir Philip Sidney's deeds, though Spain and England were rivals who stood poles apart?

When Ferdinand of Aragon married Isabel of Castille in 1474, it was but the union of two little principalities. But when Ferdinand died in 1516 and his grandson Charles the Fifth (Charles the First of Spain) succeded to the throne, his lands included Spain and Portugal, most of Italy, Holland and Belgium and Flanders, Southern and part of Central France, the seaports and coast of North Africa, most of North and South America, and Manila in the Philippines: he was also Emperor of Germany and Austria, and his ships had virtually reduced the Pacific, the South Atlantic, the Caribbean and the Mediterranean to Spanish seas. So much was the center of gravity of this vast empire located in Spain, that the German-born Charles inevitably elected to become a Spaniard. For two centuries Spain remained the richest nation in Europe, and several times narrowly missed adding the thrones of France and England to the prerogatives of its royal house. In the second of these centuries, when its material power was already beginning to wane and its physical energies to flag, Spain developed the greatest literature in Europe and impressed the indelible seal of its language and culture upon most of the area of the New World.

Having thus gotten an amazing headstart in all the aspects of life that betoken the rise of modern capitalism, Spain proved unable to continue the pace. The

discovery of America in time shifted the center of the world from the Mediterranean to the North Atlantic. The streams of gold and silver that were to fructify commerce and exchange rested in Spain only long enough to ruin its native industries and close up its mines, to raise fantastically the cost of living and impoverish its masses, and then flowed out of the country as through a sluiceway to deposit their precious sediment upon the lands of Flanders and Holland and England. The silver galleons with their tribute from the colonies rendered the Spanish monarchy independent of the Spanish people for support, thereby changing it from a progressive institution serving the purposes of the nascent bourgeoisie into an instrument of absolutist reaction and repression. Only in those countries where the monarchs had to come to the third estate for the replenishing of their purses, and where the control of purse strings begot parliaments, could the bourgeoisie develop further politically.

Spain's energies and ultimately its wealth were exhausted in conquests and audacious national and religious wars. Powerful props of the nascent capitalist structure were knocked out from under by the expulsion of the Jews, representing commerce and finance, and the Moors, preponderant in the arts and crafts and agriculture.

With economic and political decay came cultural repression. That Spain which had just been challenging all the ideas of antiquity and the middle ages, sacred and profane, suddenly became itself the captive of the past and the crusading center of cultural reaction. It was a Spaniard who became the leader of the "Counter Reformation," Spanish armies and fleets that sought to reconquer Northern Europe for Catholicism, and the Spanish Inquisition that became the symbol for all time (at least till the days of Hitler) of physical torture at the service of cultural repression and reaction.

The sunset and shining afterglow of Spain's great day is visible in the Golden Century of its literature, followed by a long night of almost three centuries of slow decay. The economic ruin is visible even in the bright pages of Spanish books. They, like Spain, are peopled predominantly by beggars, rogues and friars, proud and starving knights, omnipresent and overweening administrators and bureaucrats, arrogant military men (with ever less cause for arrogance), and a strange absence of any echoes of production and commerce. The Spanish drama has no *Merchant of Venice,* no *Bourgeois Gentilhomme.* Its peculiar contributions to literature are the romance of chivalry glorifying a never existing past, the picaresque novel peopled by rogues who live "by their wits," and that strange, rich, self-conscious symbol of itself, the mad knight who insists on living medievally in the modern world.

Land of Centralized Localism

The structure of Spanish economy and politics may best be characterized

as a kind of centralized localism. It is both cut off from Europe and its parts cut off from each other by rugged mountain chains. Its average level makes it the second highest country in Europe, only Switzerland exceeding it in elevation. It developed, as we have seen, absolute monarchy; but this soon ceased to be an instrument of economic unity and bourgeois development and became the very opposite, a force making for the throttling of all development of the bourgeoisie. In this respect its centralization was more nearly comparable to that of an Asiatic despotism than to the centralism of such a land as England or France. Far from serving to break down feudal localism and lay the foundations of economic and political unity, it based itself on the preservation of feudal privilege and institutions, decentralized economy and the retardation of capitalist development. The most commercialized and industrialized sections of the Iberian peninsula, Catalonia and Portugal, instead of supporting centralization, have actually been separatist; for they were too weak to conquer the oppressive administrative apparatus and at best could only hope to shake it off. Thence, and not as many historians have asserted out of mere imitation now of this land and now of that, has come the peculiar and perpetual controversy concerning federalism and centralism that has gripped Spain for over a century. It is a fitting symbol of this bureaucratic-military-feudal centralization that its axis is not Barcelona, center of Spanish trade and industry on the Mediterranean, nor Lisbon, center of peninsular trade and industry on the Atlantic, but Madrid in Castille, the land of castles which, in the words of the poet, "can never see the sea."

In 1808, Urquijo, a Spanish nobleman, wrote to Cuesta, then Captain-General of Madrid:

"Our Spain represents a Gothic edifice, constructed with very varied materials; there exist in our country as many governments, privileges, laws and customs as provinces. In Spain there is nothing which resembles what Europe calls social direction. These causes always constitute an obstacle to the creation of a central power strong enough to unite all the national forces."

That same year Napoleon conquered impotent Spain easily, pronounced it dead and buried as an independent nation and put his brother upon the Spanish throne. Thereupon he received a fatal surprise for, its impotent head having been decapitated, Spain manifested life, like some lower order of organism, in all its parts. Freed of the oppressive and paralyzing weight of monarchy, aristocracy and bureaucracy, Spain developed local popular *juntas,* guerrilla warfare (the very term is of Spanish derivation) and a defensive-offensive power which shook Napoleon on his mighty throne and marked the beginning of the end of his spectacular plans and dreams.

However, the bourgeoisie proved too weak, the chains of the past too heavy, and with the restoration of Ferdinand Spain underwent the most complete restoration in all Europe: Bourbons, Jesuits, Inquisition, court *camarillas,* feudal

privileges, curbs on speech, press, thought and on every manifestation of even the mildest liberalism. Throughout the nineteenth century and the first third of the twentieth, despite repeated military *pronunciamientos,* court intrigues, dynastic changes, the lopping off of some of the worst excrescences of the inherited past, and several efforts at the establishment of constitutionalism and even a republic, Spain remained essentially what it had been, till the fall of Alfonso, the last Bourbon. The economy remained local and regional; the monarchy thinly dissimulated absolutism; the landowners and the clerics and the military men, the privileged powers; the bourgeoisie feeble, backward, timid and impotent; the land the most backward of those which had known and contributed to the impulses that formed the modern world.

Spanish Imperialism

Spanish imperialism differs in both its driving force and development from that of other European powers. It was the product of the first phases of mercantile capitalism and not of the final stages of finance capitalism. Unlike the imperialism of England, in which the mercantile was ultimately to merge into the financial form, Spain lost its last overseas colony in 1898, when in the modern world imperialism as we know it was just beginning. The revenue from its ill-administered colonies had elevated the monarchy into relative independence from capitalism. The loss of Cuba, Puerto Rico and the Philippines symbolized the last stage in three centuries of slow and inglorious decay. In the realm of thought the profound disturbance expressed itself in the movement of the "Generation of '98." The monarchy lost its visible means of support, and with the Moroccan disasters of the '20's its collapse became inevitable. Unfortunately, the Reform movement of 1898, impressed by the "national shame" of having lost the empire overseas, became itself contaminated with a literary imperialism, an unwholesome thought current for a liberal movement which has left its impress on those men who, formed by the "Generation of '98," are at the head of the government of Republican Spain today.

Spanish Politics and Bureaucracy

The Spanish possessing classes, made up of a long decaying aristocracy and a cretin bourgeoisie afflicted with the disease of arrested development, have shown a peculiar constitutional anemia which has given to modern Spanish politics an amazing air of unreality. Its party labels, codes, constitutional devices and prescriptions are but modern labels of foreign importation tacked on to ancient and moldering native institutions.

All politics have the air of shadow politics. The political unreality of its

institutions is a reflex of the economic unreality of its centralism. This explains the astonishing "lyricism" of Spanish politics, the frivolous borrowing of phrases, constitutions and "institutions" from other lands without regard to reality or adaptability, and the development of such peculiar features as *rotativismo,* a system whereby under the monarchy two groups of politicians, one calling itself "liberal" and the other "conservative," and neither with a real party behind it, succeeded each other by agreement, alternating at rhythmic intervals as if governed by tidal forces or sun spots or some other "natural," *i.e. non-social,* determinant. Throughout the reigns of the last two Alfonsos, Canovas played political hide and seek with Sagasta and then Maura with Romañones, each holding office until Alfonso wanted some terrifically unpopular measure put across, then resigning to yield to his rival who of course did not repeal the measure in question. With uncanny skill the political leaders could predict the exact number of deputies of each party who would be returned at the election precipitated, for the real ruling force was a bureaucratic system dependent on the monarchy and local village bosses or *caciques.* To this peculiar institution we must add the *cesantes,* the hoard of hungry civil servants who went out with the "Liberals" to sit around in the cafés and wait for the downfall of the "Conservatives," when they would go back into the ministries and bureaus while the "Conservative" civil servants would take their places in the cafés.

With the development of a powerful working class, thanks to industrialization during the world war, the old feeble and unstable equilibrium of Spanish social forces was completely upset. A shaky monarchy, a rachitic bourgeoisie, a decrepit aristocracy, a powerful, numerous, militant, if backward, worker and peasant movement: the situation was explosive. To cope with it social demagogy reached a new high with few parallels in political history. The fitting symbol was the Constitution of the Republic of 1931, patched up from the Weimar Constitution in its death agony and the Mexican Constitution that had never come to life. On its sources a special Spanish improvement was made in the absurd opening article: "Spain is a democratic Republic of the workers of all classes." And as befitting its unhealthful sources the Constitution contained a provision for its own suspension which was the only section of the constitution which was ever applied in life!

The bureaucracy of Spain had a higher development in point of numbers, privileges and relative independence of political control than in any other European country, perhaps excepting Russia. We have already spoken of the double horde of hungry post-seekers alternating in the enjoyment of a public income. But to them must be added the military bureaucracy and the clerical bureaucracy. As appropriate to such a political structure as we have described, the Army and the Church play exceptionally important roles and the officers' corps and clergy developed special interests, privileges and powers. So powerful has the Church

been that even progressive Catholic kings who wanted to strengthen the monarchy and develop Spanish economy were compelled to fight against it. Every progressive movement in the history of modern Spain has been necessarily anti-clerical, and the ideological banner of every reactionary movement has been supplied by the Church. It is the only force capable of mass organization on the side of reaction.

Most political changes in the nineteenth century began or ended as military *coups d'etat*. The war machine of Alfonso was one of the worst in modern Europe. Azaña, who was Minister of War in the 1931 Republic, took over that machine and maintained it in the main intact. It had more officers than the mighty French war machine. They had been recruited from the sons of the feudal landowning families and were monarchists to their manicured finger-tips. They had secured advancement by court intrigue and military coups and filled their purses by notorious graft and corruption. For decades the army had been a magnificent tax-eating machine, utterly incompetent for national defense or imperialist aggression, with a long and inglorious record of defeats in Cuba, the Philippines and Morocco. It was skilled only in the technique of the *pronunciamiento* (the very word has passed into international speech) and in firing at close range upon Spanish workers and peasants. As the specific gravity of the popular masses in the social structure increased and Spanish society became more unstable, the military and clergy became ever more important and interlinked as the bulwarks against social change, and ever more arrogant in the claiming of privileges and relative independence from control. That Azaña maintained virtually intact the old monarchist military machine, until in its good time it got ready to overthrow the Republic, is the best possible political commentary on the true nature of the Republic!

Peasantry and Proletariat

There are no counterparts in Europe for the Spanish peasantry. Spain is still basically an agrarian country with over half the national income, more than 60% of its exports and the bulk of the population connected with agriculture. Nearly a third of the rural population consists of landworkers. An amazing proportion of these are organized or have passed through and remain sympathetic to labor organizations. A second contingent of nearly a third represents sharecropping, largely with organizations of its own as exemplified by the *Rabassaires* of Catalonia. Another group of about the same size consists of poor peasant families with insufficient landholdings for the maintenance of life at a human level. A small proportion of the rural population of Spain, largely absentee, owns more than a third of all the land surface in Spain and maintains it in large part out of cultivation or rented at exorbitant rates. The layer of small and middle peasants owning sufficient land to maintain a regular livelihood is so thin as

to be lost in the total rural mass. The peasantry is one of the most rebellious in Europe, accustomed to guerrilla warfare, to entrance into the rival bands in the long century of civil wars that preceded the present one, accustomed to proceed in local uprisings against local tyrants and to take justice into its own hands, closely allied with the working class which only yesterday left the fields and carries with it to the industrial centers a large residue of peasant ideology and outlook. It is this rebelliousness and limited local horizon and tradition of direct action against immediately visible tyrants which has carried over into the cities and provides one of the springs which feeds the anarcho-syndicalist mentality of the orgainzed working class. In no other country of the world are the peasants and landworkers organized on such a scale directly into the labor organizations.

The labor movement of Spain shows decisive "peculiarities" in its development. Despite the economic backwardness of Spain, the organized labor movement has a higher specific gravity in the total social composition of the country than that of any other land. Counterposed to the senile aristocracy and feeble bourgeoisie it is an overwhelming force, the only force capable of ruling in the long run. During the world war it went through a stormy development and has repeatedly been on the threshold of power since then. Not its relative numerical strength but its ideological backwardness, the coalition-government prejudices of its social-democratic and the anarchist prejudices of its syndicalist wing, prevented the labor movement taking power in 1919, 1931, 1934 and 1936. Spain can have no stable government till this labor movement is utterly crushed as in Fascist Italy, or till it has taken power as did the Russian proletariat in 1917.

Miguel Maura, Conservative leader, addressed himself in October 1934 to Gil Robles in a parliamentary discourse which contained these words:

"Does your excellency know what is the composition of the Spanish social body at this moment, as it was a year ago, and a year and a half ago? Recently the Public Safety Department made a most interesting count of the membership and respective strength of the labor organizations and the parties of the right. This census, as of the early months of 1934, shows the following figures: Socialists, 1,444,474 dues-paying members. Syndicalists or Anarcho-Syndicalists, 1,577,547; Communists, 133,266. Strength of the Right, dues-paying or not, for in the organizations of the Right dues are not paid, 549,946. (Buzzing and excitement in the Chamber.)"[4]

Maura waited for the excitement to cease and then said to his leader: "If

4 The classification "Socialists" included the Socialist Party, then about 50,000 and the Unión General de Trabajadores (UGT), the Socialist-led trade union center. The classification Syndicalists or Anarcho-Syndicalists included the membership of the Federación Anarquista Ibérica (FAI), with perhaps twenty or thirty thousand members, and the Syndicalist-led Confederación Nacional de Trabajo (CNT). The classification Communists included the Communist Party of Spain, the Partido Obrero de Unificación Marxista (POUM), the Communist

these forces, today divided, should unite, what will become of us, Señor Gil Robles?"

The outstanding peculiarity of this labor movement is the strength of Syndicalism and Anarchism. Spain is the only country in which these movements, in intimate union, constitute a significant force. Anarchism has lingered longest in those countries of backward industry, a weak bourgeoisie, a numerous and radical peasantry and petty bourgeoisie, and a strong survival of feudalism in social structure and institutions. The "Latin" peoples, for the above reasons and others of tradition and social psychology, have tended to be more receptive to the anarcho-syndicalist and less to the Marxist philosophy than have the Northern, more Protestant, more industrialized and capitalist lands. To this must be added special Spanish features such as the tradition of violence and action out of proportion to occasion, the lyricism of Spanish thought, the natural negative reaction to the shadow character of Spanish political life, and other factors too rich in content to be analyzed in a summary article. It is significant that Spanish Socialism grew out of petty-bourgeois liberalism as Spanish Anarchism out of petty-bourgeois radicalism, and that both have been going through such tremendous transformations during the course of the present civil war that if the proletariat is victorious both movements will converge from their older philosophies toward a basically Marxist revolutionary type. Nowhere in the history of Anarchism, not even in the Paris Commune and still less in the Russian Revolution, has that movement showed such capacity for the modification of its dogmas in the face of the realities of struggle as have the Spanish Anarchists and especially the Syndicalists. The importance of this will be appreciated still more if we bear in mind that the Syndicalists have an overwhelming majority of the industrial proletariat and virtually all of heavy industry in their organization. Spanish industry is so concentrated that over 45% of the total industrial proletariat of Spain lives in Barcelona and the nearby industrial towns of Catalonia where the militant unions of the CNT are dominant.

Tenacity of Spanish Struggle

In 1854 Marx wrote in his European correspondence to the New York *Tribune*:

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auxiliary organizations like the Red Aid, and a few independent "Red Unions" under Communist Party or POUM leadership which were affiliated to neither of the two great trade union centers. Allowing for the duplications thus involved, and taking into account the duplications also in the parties and combat organizations and "mass organizations" (like Acción Católica) of the Right, the relative organized strength of Left and Right, or more accurately of organized workers and organized bourgeois-feudal reaction, shows a proportion of something like six to one! Today the UGT and the CNT between them, without counting any other labor organizations, have a membership of over 4,000,000 in a total population which, before the civil war, was calculated as about 28,000,000. With their families, the organized workers thus make a majority of the total population, and a still more decisive majority of the population on the Loyalist side.

"Spain has never succeeded in acquiring the latest French style, so fashionable in 1848, of beginning and ending a revolution in three days."

The revolutions and political struggles of the nineteenth century more than bear him out, and the present one does so as well. The civil wars of the last century embraced cycles of three to nine years and even more, and they kept Spain in almost constant turmoil. There was the War of Independence (against Napoleon) 1808 to 1814; the struggle for a liberal monarchy, 1820-23, succeeded by the fresh outbreak of 1824-43 (the two together really comprised a cycle of twenty-three years of almost continuous struggle); and there was the war over the question of the Republic of 1868-75 followed by and merging into the Carlist Wars which continued to 1878 (in effect a ten-year cycle). The present cycle really opens with the unsuccessful military revolt at Jaca in 1929, goes through the "Republican Revolution" of 1931, the fascist reaction of 1934, the military *coup* and proletarian counter-uprising of 1936 which, like most of the preceding movements, has merged with foreign invasion and struggle for independence in what promises to be a civil war of unprecedented length and fury, and which may well go over into world war "and/or"—to borrow a legal expression which seems peculiarly appropriate here—a new wave of international proletarian revolutions. The struggle in both its social and international implications has made this obscure, backward and unimportant Spain into an important center of world history once more.

Leading Principles of Marxism: A Restatement

BY KARL KORSCH

I. Marxism versus Sociology

What is the relationship between Marxism and modern sociological teaching? If we think of the sociology originated by Comte, and first named by him, as a special section in the system of constituted sciences, we shall find no link between it and Marxism. Marx and Engels paid no attention to either the name or content of this ostensibly new branch of knowledge. When Marx felt himself compelled to take terse notice of Comte's *Cours de Philosophie Positive,* thirty years after its appearance, "because the English and French make such a fuss about the fellow," he still spoke of "Positivism" and "Comtism" as of something to which he was "thoroughly opposed as a politician" and of which he had "a very poor opinion as a man of science."[1] Marx's attitude is theoretically and historically well-founded. The science of socialism, as formulated by Marx, owed nothing to this "sociology" of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries which originated with Comte and was propagated by Mill and Spencer. It would be more correct to say that "sociology" is a reaction against modern socialism. From this standpoint only is it possible to understand the essential unity of the divers theoretical and practical tendencies which during the last hundred years have found their expression in this science. As with Comte in his relation to St. Simon, his "great master,"[2] so have the latter bourgeois "sociologists" opposed another way of answering the questions first raised by the rising proletarian movement to the theory and thus also to the practice of *socialism.* To these issues, which modern historical development has put on the

1 See Marx's letter to Engels of 7/7/66, *Marx-Engels-Gesamt Ausgabe* (MEGA) III, 3; p. 345); also Marx's letter to Beesly of 6/12/71, and further the letter to Engels of 5/23/69 in which Spencer's name is curtly mentioned along with some other contemporary writers (MEGA III, 4; p. 58). See also the ironical dismissal of "Comtist recipes for the cookshops of the future" in Marx's reply to the reviewer of *Capital* in the Paris *Revue positiviste* in the preface to the second edition of *Capital,* 1872-73, and Engels letter to Tönnies of 1/24/95 quoted in G. Mayer's Biography of Friedrich Engels (1934) Vol. II, p. 552.

2 See Levy-Bruehl, *La Philosophie d'Auguste Comte* (1900), p. 8.

agenda of present-day society, Marxism stands in a much more original and direct relationship than the whole of the so-called "sociology" of Comte, Spencer and their followers. Fundamentally, then, there exists no theoretical relationship between those two doctrines of society. Bourgeois sociologists refer to the revolutionary socialist science of the proletariat as "an unscientific mixture of theory and politics." Socialists, on the other hand, dismiss bourgeois sociology as mere "ideology."

The position of Marx, however, is quite different toward the first "Enquirers into the Social Nature of Man," who in the preceding centuries, in the radical struggles of the rising bourgeois class against the obsolete feudal order, had first set up the new idea of *Civil Society* as a revolutionary slogan, and had even unearthed, in the new science of *Political Economy,* the material foundations of this new "civilized" form of society.[3]

According to Marx's own statement, made in 1859, in the preface to his *Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy,*[4] he had begun the development of his materialistic theory of society sixteen years earlier with a critical revision of Hegel's *Philosophy of Law.* This was a task he had set himself because of certain grave doubts which had recently assailed him in regard to his Hegelian idealistic creed. Previously, as an editor of the *Rheinische Zeitung* (1842-43), he had for the first time found himself called upon to discuss "so-called material interests." He had already begun to study "economic questions" and had become vaguely acquainted with the ideas of "French Socialism and Communism." His criticism of Hegel led him to the conclusion that "legal relations as well as forms of state cannot be understood out of themselves nor out of the so-called general development of the human mind, but on the contrary, are rooted in the material conditions of life, the aggregate of which Hegel, following the precedent of the English and French of the eighteenth century, grouped together under the name of 'civil society'—and that the anatomy of civil society is to be sought in political economy."

We see here the decisive significance which the notion of "civil society" had gained for the young Marx who was at that time just completing his transition from Hegelian idealism to his later materialistic theory. While still formally basing his materialistic criticism of Hegel's idealistic glorification of the state on the realistic conclusions (unexpected in an idealist philosopher) regarding the nature of civil society which he had found embodied in Hegel's *Philosophy of Law,*[5] Marx now definitely abandoned Hegel and all his idealistic philosophy. Instead he associated himself with those earlier investigators into the nature of

3 See, for example, Adam Ferguson, *An Essay on the History of Civil Society,* 1767 and Adam Smith, *An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations,* 1776.

4 Hereafter referred to as *Preface 1859.*

5 See the comprehensive manuscripts of 1843 now published in MEGA I, 1, 1; pp. 401-553.

society who had arisen in the period of revolutionary development of the English and French bourgeoisie, when the name "sociology" had not yet been invented, but "society" had already been discovered as a special and independent realm of knowledge.

Hegel, indeed, had not derived that deep realistic knowledge of "civil society," which stands in such sharp relief to the rest of his book,[6] from an independent study of the then extremely backward state of German society. He took both the name and content of his "civil society" ready-made from the French and English social philosophers, politicians and economists. Behind Hegel, as Marx said, stand the "English and French of the eighteenth century" with their new discoveries of the structure and movement of society, who in their turn reflect the real historical development which culminated in the Industrial Revolution in England after the middle of the 18th century and in the great French Revolution of 1789 to 1815.

Marx, then, in developing his new socialist and proletarian science, took his cue from that early study of society, which, although it was first communicated to him by Hegel, had really been born in the revolutionary epoch of the bourgeoisie. In the first place he took over the results of "classical political economy" (from Petty and Boisguillebert through Quesnay and Smith up to Ricardo) consciously developing them as that which the great bourgeois investigators had already more or less unconsciously taken them to be, *i.e.*, the basic structure or, as it were, "the skeleton" of civil society. Even this basic importance of political economy, to which Marx alludes in calling it the "anatomy of civil society," had before him been recognized by his immediate predecessors, the German idealist philosophers, Kant, Fichte and Hegel. In the philosophical system of Hegel, "civil society" is based on the "system of needs" explored by the new science of political economy, and the philosopher had, in an earlier work, even expressly described the "system of needs" as the "first form of government," as opposed to such higher developed forms as the state and the law.

The very pungency with which Marx in his later writings repeatedly emphasized that post-classical bourgeois economy (the so-called "vulgar economy") had not advanced beyond Ricardo in any important points,[7] and scornfully dismissed the new socio-scientific synthesis of Comte's Positivism for the infinitely greater achievement of Hegel,[8] only shows once more the lasting influence of that early phase of economic and social thought on the theory of Marx. This is true even though his analysis of the new development of society and the new needs and aims of the proletriat, now emerging as an independent class, far

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6 See Hegel, *Philosophy of Law,* Part III, Section 2 (Civil Society, esp. §188 *et seq.* (System of Needs), §230 *et seq.* (Police).

7 See *Capital* I, p. 55 and *Theories of Surplus Value* III, pp. 571-76.

8 See letter to Engels of 7/7/66.

transcended the results of those older theories. The proletarian class guided by the Marxist theory is therefore not only, as Friedrich Engels put it, "the inheritor of German classical philosophy,"[9] it also is the inheritor of classical political economy and social research. As such it has transformed the traditional classical theory in accordance with the changes in historical conditions.

Marx no longer regards bourgeois society from the standpoint of its first phase of development and its opposition to the feudal structure of medieval society. He is not only interested in the static laws of its existence. He treats bourgeois society as historical in all its traits and therefore merely a transitory organization of society. He explores the whole process of its historical genesis and development, and the inherent tendencies which, in their further development, lead to its revolutionary overthrow. He finds these tendencies twofold: *objective* in the economic basis of bourgeois society, *subjective* in the new division of social classes arising out of this same economic basis and not out of politics, law, ethics, etc. Thus civil society, which until then had constituted a homogeneous whole, opposed only to feudalism, is now torn into two opposed "parties." The assumed "civil society" is in reality "bourgeois society," *i.e.* a society based on the cleavage of classes, in which the bourgeois class controls other classes economically and therefore politically and culturally. So at last "la classe la plus laborieuse et la plus misérable" enters the widened horizon of social science. Marxist theory recognises the class war of the oppressed and exploited wage laborers of present-day society to be a war for the supersession of the present structure of society by a more highly developed form of society. As a materialistic science of the contemporary development of bourgeois society, Marxist theory is at the same time a practical instrument for the struggle of the proletariat to bring about the realisation of proletarian society.

The later artificial detachment of sociology as a special branch of learning, whose scientific origin dates from Comte, and, at the best, allows the great original thinkers who have done the real productive work in this field to stand as its "forerunners," represents nothing more than an escape from the practical and, therefore, also theoretical tasks of the present historical epoch. Marx's new socialist and proletarian science, which further developed the revolutionary theory of the classical founders of the doctrine of society in a way corresponding to the changed historical situation, is the genuine social science of our time.

II. The Principle of Historical Specification

Marx comprehends all things social in terms of a definite historical epoch.

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9 See the concluding sentence of *Ludwig Feuerbach and the End of Classical Philosophy,* 1888. A similar statement, with an amplifying reference to the equal importance of the "developed economic and political conditions in England and France," is found in the preface to the first German edition of Engels' *Socialism, Utopian and Scientific,* 1882.

He criticises all the categories of the bourgeois theorists of society in which this specific character has been effaced. Already in his first economic work we find him reproaching Ricardo for having applied the specifically bourgeois concept of *rent* to "landed property of all epochs and of all countries. This is the error of all economists who represent bourgeois production relations as eternal."[10]

The scope of the principle of historical specification is clearly demonstrated in this example. *Landed property* has been widely different in character and has played very different roles in the various historical epochs of society. Already the different ways in which primitive communal property in land had been broken up, directly influenced the varied forms of the later development of society based upon private property.[14] Up to the Middle Ages *landed property* (agriculture) constituted, according to Marx, the central category, dominating all the other categories of production, just as *capital* does in present-day bourgeois society.[12] The different ways in which, in different countries, after the victory of the capitalist mode of production, feudal property in land was subjected to capital; the different ways in which rent was transformed into a part of capitalist surplus value, and agriculture into an industry—all retain their importance for the capitalist systems which arose therefrom, for the different forms of the labor movement which subsequently developed within them, and for the different forms in which the transition to the socialist mode of production will ultimately be effected in each of the different systems. For this reason Marx investigated with particular care, to the end of his life, the history of landed property and rent as shown on the one hand in the *United States,* and on the other hand in *Russia.* In the same way, at the end of the nineteenth century, Lenin, in his *Development of Capitalism in Russia,* analyzed particularly the specific historical forms of this transition process.[13] Yet all this comprehensive study of the various historical forms serves, with both Marx and Lenin, only as a base for the working out of the specific character of *capitalist* rent in fully developed *bourgeois society.*

In the fundamental analysis of the modern capitalist mode of production, which forms the subject matter of the first book of *Capital,* Marx does not deal with the category of rent at all. What is discussed there, in addition to the general function of the soil as an element of the labor process itself,[14] is only the different

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10 See *Misère de la Philosophie,* 1847 (MEGA I, 6, p. 217).

11 See *Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy,* 1859, p. 9, footnote 1.

12 See the Ms. of a "general introduction" to the *Critique of Political Economy* dated 8/25/57, first printed in *Neue Zeit* XXI, 1, 1903—hereafter referred to as *Introduction 1857.*

13 Lenin began to write this book in 1896 while he was in prison and went on with it during his exile in Siberia. The first Russian edition appeared in 1899, the second in 1907. German edition in *Collected Works* III, Vienna-Berlin 1929.

14 See *Capital* I, pp. 169 *et seq.*

ways by which the transition to the modern capitalist mode of production reacted upon the conditions of the agricultural proletariat, first, in developed capitalist countries,[15] second, in such countries as Ireland that had fallen behind in the process of industrialization, and finally in the colonial countries.[16]

Marx discusses "rent" in the proper place, in a section of the third book of *Capital,* in which the special forms of capitalist *distribution* are analyzed as they arise from the special historical forms of capitalist *production.*[17] Even here, there is no room for an independent exposition of earlier historical forms. Only a few scattered remarks throw a flash of light on the contrast between the modern bourgeois form of landed property and past historical forms; and only an additional closing chapter—and indeed, of the that part—is devoted to the historical *"Genesis of Capitalist Rent."*[18] Indeed, as Marx says in the opening phrase of this whole section, "the analysis of landed property in its various historical forms lies beyond the scope of this work."[19]

The concept of "rent," then, as discussed in the Marxist theory, is in no way a general term referring to landed property of all epochs. The form of landed property which is considered in *Capital* is "a specifically historical one; it is that form into which feudal land ownership and small peasants' agriculture have been *transformed* through the influence of capital and of the capitalist mode of production."[20] In this sense, and in this sense only, an analysis of modern capitalist rent, or of that portion of the surplus value produced by industrial capital which falls into the hands of the capitalistic landowner, is a necessary part of the complete analysis of the process of capitalist production which is embodied in the three books of *Capital.*

The application of the principle of historical specification is further demonstrated by the way Marx deals with the different historical forms of capital itself. Just as in the present epoch *industrial capital* appears as the standard form, so did *merchants' capital* and its twin brother, *interest-bearing capital,* and the various sub-forms of these (more exactly described by Marx as "capital for trading in goods," "capital for trading in money," "capital for lending money") occupy an independent and, in certain respects, a predominating position in the epochs preceding capitalist society, and, indeed, in the first phases of capitalist society itself. Even in present-day fully developed capitalist economy the merchant and the banker, though not involved in actual production like the

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15 *Ibid,* pp. 622 *et seq. Ibid,* pp. 645 *et seq.*

16 *Ibid,* chapters 24 and 25 dealing with "so-called original accumulation" and the "modern colonial system."

17 See *Capital* III, 2, pp. 153-348.

18 *Ibid,* pp. 315-348.

19 *Ibid,* p. 153.

20 *Ibid,* pp. 153 *et seq.*

industrial capitalist, still perform a definite function in the circulation of capital. They also participate in the distribution of the total "surplus value," a considerable part of the yearly amount at the disposal of the capitalist class falls to their share as "commercial profit" and "interest"—just as we have seen another part of it going in the form of "rent" to landed owners of property who have as little to do with actual production. Moneylenders' capital has even recaptured an important position—though not, as many Marxists have believed, a definite supremacy—in its new form as an integral part of the modern so-called "finance capital," *i.e.* a system of highly concentrated capital created by the fusion of private and state-controlled bank capital with trust and state-controlled industrial capital.[21]

The Marxist analysis of modern capitalist production starts from the assumption that the previously independent forms of trading-capital and money-capital have been *transformed* into mere accessories of the now prevailing form. It is true that capitalist production even today bears the stamp of its historical origin—the intrusion of the merchant into the sphere of feudal production. All capitalist production remains essentially a *production for sale*. Every article resulting from capitalist production is to be sold as a commodity, whether it is sold to another industrial capitalist who needs it for carrying on his own process of production or, ultimately, to the immediate consumer. Again the very way in which "capital" first arose and gained control of production in the shape of *money,* as supplied by wealthy individuals, merchants, usurers, etc., constantly repeats itself under the present condition of fully developed capitalist production. Every new aggregate of capital, even to-day, "enters upon the stage, *i.e.* comes into the market—the commodity market, the labor market or the money market—still in the form of money that by a definite process has to be transformed into capital."[22]

Nevertheless the "secret," not only of "how capital produces" but also of "how capital *is* produced"—and incidentally the key to the abolition of all capitalist exploitation and wage-slavery—can in no way be theoretically discovered by an analysis of the functions performed by those "accessory" forms of capital in the process of circulation, or of the revenues which accrue to the capitalists concerned, in consideration of the "services" they perform in this sphere. "One will therefore understand," says Marx, "why in our analysis of the basic form of capital, of the form in which it determines the economic organization of modern society, its popular, and as it were, antediluvian forms, 'trading capital' and 'usurers capital,' are for the present (*viz.* in the analysis of the

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21 See Hilferding's *Finance Capital,* 1910 and Lenin's *Imperialism, the Newest Stage of Capitalism,* 1917.

22 See *Capital* I, p. 149, and for more detailed analysis of the various forms which capital assumes in its different stages, *Capital* II, Chap. 1.

actual process of capitalist production in the first book of *Capital*) entirely ignored."[23]

Even when, in the second and third books of *Capital,* Marx comes back to these "antediluvian forms" in his analysis of capitalist circulation and distribution,[24] he takes as his main theme, not their historical development, but only the specific form into which they have been transformed by the action of modern industrial capital. Just as with rent, the historical analyses which run through the whole of Marx's work, and both the concluding chapters added to the sections concerned, under the headings *"Historical data concerning merchants' capital"* and *"Pre-capitalistic conditions,"*[25] merely serve to illuminate that great historical process through which, in the course of centuries and millenia, *trade* and *money transactions* lost more and more of their originally dominating position until they assumed their present place as mere detached and onesidedly developed modes of existence of the various functions which industrial capital sometimes adopts and sometimes discards within the sphere of its circulation.

There is one aspect alone, under which rent as well as trading-capital and money-capital might have been treated as a proper subject in Marx's analysis of the modern capitalist mode of production and of the economic form of society based thereon. According to an original and more comprehensive plan, Marx would have followed up the discussion of the more strictly economic questions of production, circulation and distribution, social classes etc., as contained in the three books of *Capital,* by an investigation of what may be called "economic questions of an higher order" such as the relation between *town and country* and the *international relations of production.*[26]

Only with these later researches would Marx's analysis have reached the point where the antagonism of landed property to *capital,* as well as that of trade and money-capital to *industrial capital* survives in present-day society; the former as a relation between agricultural and town industry and as an international relation between primarily agrarian and industrial countries—the latter as a relation between trading cities and factory towns, and on an international scale between commercial and industrial states.

The principle of historical specification as illustrated by the preceding examples (landed property and the various forms of capital) is strictly adhered to by Marx in all his economic and socio-historical researches. He deals with all

23 *Ibid,* p. 165.

24 See *Capital* II, Chapters 1-4; III, Chapters 16-20, 21-36.

25 *Ibid,* III, Chapters 20 and 36.

26 See *Introduction* 1857, pp. 778-79 and *Capital* I, p. 338 where Marx expressely states that he cannot here go further into the topic of the cleavage between town and country, although "the whole economic history of society is summed up in the movement of this antagonism."—See also the more detailed discussion of the later changes in the plan of *Capital* in the introduction to my edition, Berlin 1932, pp. 8 *et seq.*

categories in that specific form and in that specific connection in which they appear in modern bourgeois society.[27]

The contrast which exists in this respect between Marx and his forerunners, comes out most strikingly in a comparison. While the work of the last representative of classical bourgeois economy, David Ricardo, is devoted to the *Principles of Political Economy,* Marx strictly limited his economic research to "modern bourgeois production,"[28] and finally gave the work which contains the whole of his analysis and critique of all traditional political economy the plain and definite name *Capital.* Ricardo begins the exposition of his system with the general concept of "value"; Marx commences his critical investigation of the theory and the facts underlying modern bourgeois economy with the analysis of an external object, a palpable thing—"commodity." Again, Ricardo frees the traditional economic concept of value from the last earthly impurities that were still attached to it by his predecessors; while Marx, on the contrary, regards even the concept of "commodity" in its isolation, as it applies also to conditions other than those of present-day bourgeois production, as too abstract a category, and defines it specifically as an element of "bourgeois wealth"[29] or as the "wealth of those societies in which the capitalist mode of production prevails."[30] Only in this specific definition does "commodity" form the subject matter of his investigation. Only as properties of such a commodity do the general concepts of "value in use" and "value in exchange," and the other terms of the classical economic system derived from these fundamental concepts, interest him. He does not treat them as eternal categories. Nor does he for that matter transform himself into an historian. While fully aware of the fact that many economic categories of modern bourgeois society occurred, in other specific relations to the whole of the mode of production, also in earlier epochs, he does not go into the history of "money," of "exchange of commodities," of "wage-labor," or that of "coöperation," "division of labor," etc. He discusses the different stages of the historical development of all these economic concepts only in so far as it is necessary for his main theme: the analysis of the specific character assumed by them in modern bourgeois society.

All the economic terms of Marx, then, as opposed to those of the classical bourgeois economists, refer to a specific historical epoch of production. This applies even to that, most general term, *value* which, according to Marx, must still be distinguished from "value in exchange"—the latter being only the external form in which the intrinsic "value" of a given commodity manifests itself in the ratio of exchange of such commodities.[31] This most abstract term,

27 See *Introduction* 1857, pp. 774 *et seq.*
28 *Ibid,* p. 712.
29 See *Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy,* opening sentence.
30 See *Capital* I, opening sentence.
31 See *Capital* I, pp. 50-52.

which Marx adopted from the later classical economists, has been highly suspect to some well-meaning but superficial interpreters of Marx who found that the concept of an intrinsic "value," distinct from exchange-value, reeks of scholasticism, metaphysical realism, Hegelian idealism and what not, and for this reason does no credit to a "materialistic" science. As a matter of fact, Marx discussed just these fundamental concepts of his economic theory in a somewhat obscure language, thereby avowedly "coquetting" with the "modes of expression peculiar to that mighty thinker, the idealist philosopher Hegel."[32] However, there is no point in accepting the term exchange-value, as taken by Marx from his forerunners, the founders of classical political economy, and rejecting that of intrinsic "value" which was used by Marx only as a means to work out more clearly the true content of the "value" concept of the classical writers and to expose critically what he called the "fetishism" underlying the whole of their economic theory.[33]

Marx was fully conscious of the fact that all concepts of "value" are strictly relative terms. They either denote an immediate relation between objects and man (which becomes a reality by actual use or consumption), or a relation of a different order (realized by the exchange of such objects), *viz.* the quantitative relation in which use-values of one sort are exchanged for those of another sort whenever they are exchanged. The relations of the latter order had been regarded by the later classical economists as the only "value" to be dealt with in a strictly economic science, and had been styled by them *value in exchange* or *value* proper, as distinguished from mere utility or *"use-value."* Marx easily agreed with the classical writers when they established the difference in kind prevailing between *value* as a quantitative relation arising through the exchange of commodities, *i.e.* by a social process; and *use-value* as a merely qualitative relation between external objects and man. But he did not agree with them in the ultimate location of the social relations manifesting themselves in the "value" relations of the commodities as established by their exchange. A closer investigation of the economic concept of "value" shows that this concept expresses a relation arising not between the commodities as exchanged on the market, but rather a relation previously established between human beings coöperating in the production of such commodities, *a social relation of production arising between man and man.* Indeed, the main result of Marx's criticism of the traditional theory of political economy consists in the discovery and description of these fundamental social relations of men—relations which, for a definite historical epoch, appear to the subjects concerned in the disguised and, as it were, perverted form of relations of things, *viz.* as "value-relations" of the commodities

32 See postscript to second edition of *Capital,* 1872-73—hereafter referred to as *Postscript* 1873.

33 See *Capital* I, pp. 83-95.

coöperatively produced by them and mutually exchanged on the market.

"Value," then, in all its denominations, just as other economic things or relations such as "commodity," "money," "labor-power," "capital," means to Marx a *socio-historical fact* or something which though not physical is still given in an *empirically verifiable manner*. "As in general, with every socio-historical science, we must always keep in mind when considering the progress of economic theory, that the subject matter, here modern bourgeois society, is given in the mind of the observer just as it is in reality, and that its categories express, therefore, forms of being, modes of existence, and often only single aspects of this definite society or subject matter."[35]

We shall later in another connection study the far-reaching theoretical and practical implications of this apparently minor difference between the scientific method of Marx and that of the classical bourgeois economists. We here confine ourselves to one most important result. The concept of *commodity,* in the specific form and context in which it appears under the conditions of the present system of "capitalistic commodity production, " includes from the very beginning a commodity of a peculiar nature, incorporating the flesh and blood in the hands and heads of the wage-laborers—the *commodity labor-power*. "These laborers who have to sell themselves piecemeal, are a commodity like every other article of commerce, and are consequently exposed to all the vicissitudes of competition, to all the fluctuations of the market."[36] Further, the sellers of this peculiar commodity, under the very condition of its sale, are never in the position of free agents,[37] for they "live only so long as they find work, and find work only so long as their labor increases capital."[38]

Only by bearing in mind this specific sense in which for Marx "commodity production" or *"general" commodity production* becomes entirely equivalent to present-day *"capitalist" commodity production*[39] can we understand the importance of that general analysis of "commodity" which in Marx's book precedes all further analysis and critique of the capitalist mode of production Marx is aware of the "definite historical conditions" which are necessary in order that a product may become a "commodity" and that, in its further develop-

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34 See Marx's letter to Engels 4/2/58, in which he says that this concept of value "although an abstraction, is an *historical abstraction* which, therefore, could not only be made on the basis of a particular economic development of society." (MEGA III, 2, p. 301).

35 See *Introduction* 1857, p. 777.—See also the preceding remark on p. 774 where Marx opposing his own "theoretical" method to that hitherto applied by the classical theorists, emphasized the same point: "Even when applying a theoretical method we must bear in mind the subject, society, as our real presupposition."

36 See *Communist Manifesto* 1848 (MEGA I, 6, p. 532).

37 See the Report of the Inspectors of Factories of the six months ending April 30, 1850, p. 45—quoted by Marx in *Capital* I, p. 310.

38 See *Communist Manifesto* 1848 (MEGA I, 532).

39 See *Capital* I, p. 171 footnote; see also *Capital* II, pp. 9, 11 *et seq.*, 88, etc.

ment, "money" should appear as the general commodity, for the purpose of exchange. "The appearance of products as *commodities* pre-supposed such a development of the social division of labor, that the separation of use-value from exchange-value, a separation which first begins with barter, must already have been completed." Again, "the peculiar functions of *money* which it performs, either as the mere equivalent of commodities, or as means of circulation, or means of payment, as hoard or as universal money, point to very different stages in the process of social production."[40] Yet we know by experience that a relatively primitive development of society suffices for the production of all these forms. It is otherwise with capital. "The historical conditions of its existence are by no means given with the mere circulation of money and commodities. It can spring into life only when the owner of the means of production and subsistence meets in the market with the free laborer selling his labor-power. And this one historical condition comprises a world's history. Capital therefore, announces from its first appearance a new epoch in the process of social production.[41]

At this stage only are we able to grasp the full importance of *industrial capital* as the only form of existence of capital which adequately represents the nature of modern capitalist production. "Industrial capital," according to an express assertion of Marx which we may safely take to be his final and most complete statement on this matter, "gives to production its capitalistic character. Its existence includes that of class antagonism between capitalists and laborers. To the extent that it assumes control over social production, the technique and social organization of the labor process are revolutionized and with them the economic and historical type of society. The other kinds of capital, which appear before industrial capital amid past or declining conditions of social production, are not only subordinated to it and suffer changes in the mechanism of their functions corresponding with it, but move on it as a basis; they live and die, stand and fall, as this, their basis, lives and dies, stands and falls."[42]

III. The Principle of Concrete Application

The principle of historical specification, besides its theoretical importance as an improved method of sociological analysis and research, becomes of first-rate practical importance as a polemical weapon in the disputes between the apologists defending and the critics assailing the existing conditions of society. The manner in which this weapon is wielded by the Marxists appears in the statements of Marx and Engels in replying to the bourgeois objections to communism.[43] One

40 See *Capital* I, pp. 170-1.
41 *Ibid;* see also *Capital* II, p. 13.
42 See *Capital* II, p. 29.
43 See the second section of the *Communist Manifesto,* 1848 (MEGA I, 6, pp. 538-44; also p. 528).

basic form of argument recurs in all these replies. In answer to the accusation that the Communists want to abolish property, individuality, liberty, culture, law, family, "fatherland," etc., the Communists say that the point at issue here is not the general foundations of all social life but only the specific historical forms assumed by them in present-day bourgeois society. All economic, class and other relations which constitute the specific historical character of bourgeois society are discussed, always with the result that the would-be defenders of the natural and necessary foundations of all social order are driven to become the biased protagonists of the peculiar conditions of existing bourgeois society and the peculiar needs of the bourgeois class.

The first objection raised by the bourgeoisie to communism is that the Communists want to abolish *property*. To this the *Communist Manifesto* replies:

"The abolition of existing property relations is not at all a distinctive feature of Communism.

"All property relationships in the past have been continually subject to historical change consequent upon the change in historical conditions.

"The French Revolution, for example, abolished feudal property in favor of bourgeois property.

"The distinguishing feature of Communism is not the abolition of property generally, but the abolition of bourgeois property.

"But modern bourgeois private property is the final and most complete expression of the system of producing and appropriating products that is based on class antagonism, on the exploitation of the many by the few.

"In this sense, the theory of the Communists may be summed up in the single phrase: abolition of private property."

It is then further argued that the property to be abolished is not the "hard-won, personally acquired property" which, according to the ideological concept of the theoretical spokesmen of the bourgeoisie, is "the groundwork of all personal freedom, activity and independence." Such property really means "the property of the petty artisan and the small peasant," a form of property that existed before the bourgeois form. The Communists have no need to abolish that. "The development of industry has abolished it and is abolishing it daily." "Property in its present form moves within the antagonism of capital and wage-labor." It has a specific and different significance for each of the two great classes confronting each other in modern bourgeois society—the bourgeoisie and the proletariat. *"To be a capitalist is to have not only a personal, but a social status in production."* In the same way wage-labor, the labor of the proletariat, does not create individual property for the laborer: it creates capital, *i.e.* the social power that exploits wage-labor. "The abolition of property, therefore, does not mean the transformation of personal property into social property, it is only the social character of the property that undergoes a change; it loses

its class character."

The second objection of the bourgeoisie is that the Communists want to destroy *individuality* and *freedom*. Communism replies that what is at stake here is only the "bourgeois individuality, independence and freedom:"

"By freedom is meant, under the present bourgeois conditions of production: free trade, free selling and free buying. But if haggling disappears, free haggling disappears also. This talk about free haggling, and all other braggadocio of our bourgeoisie about freedom in general, has a meaning, if any, only in contrast with restricted haggling, with the fettered traders of the Middle Ages; but has no meaning when opposed to the Communist abolition of haggling, of the bourgeois conditions of production, and of the bourgeoisie itself."

The bourgeois calls it an "abolition of property" when private property is abolished. But this property, in the hands of this class, exists only by being cut off from the vast majority of society. From the moment when labor can no more be transformed into capital, money, rent; in short into a social power capable of being monopolized, the bourgeois complains that "individuality is being destroyed." He confesses, therefore, that by "individuality" he means none other than that of the bourgeois, *i.e.* the capitalist owner of property. "This individuality must, indeed, be destroyed."

In the same way the bourgeoisie confuses the general concept of work, and *activity,* with the specific bourgeois form of wage-labor, the forced labor of the propertyless worker for the benefit of the non-laboring owners of capital. If the bourgeoisie is afraid that "with the abolition of private property all activity will cease and universal laziness overtake us," the *Manifesto* rejoins:

"According to this, bourgeois society ought long ago to have been wrecked through sheer idleness: for those of its members who work acquire nothing and those who acquire anything do not work. The whole of this objection is but another expression of the tautology: There can no longer be any wage-labor when there is no longer any capital."

Next, the bourgeoisie laments the threatened loss of *culture* through the advent of Communism. To this complaint also Marx has a specific reply:

"Just as to the bourgeois the disappearance of class property is the disappearance of production itself, so the disappearance of class culture is to him identical with the disappearance of all culture.

"That culture the loss of which he laments is, for the enormous majority, a mere training to act as a machine."

As in the case of individuality, freedom and culture, the so-called menace of Communism to the *state* and the *law* is not aimed at those general functions of unifying the elements of society into a living and developing whole which have, in the past, perforce been fulfilled by state compulsion and coercive law, though in an increasingly defective manner. It is specifically directed against

the present-day state which is "only an executive committee for managing the affairs of the bourgeois class as a whole"—and against that modern bourgeois legal order which is "only the will of the bourgeoisie made into a law for all—a will whose content is determined by the material conditions of existence of the bourgeois class."

Abolition of the family! "Even the most radical," says the *Communist Manifesto,* "flares up at this infamous purpose of the Communists." One more the Marxist replies specifically:

"On what foundation is the present family, the bourgeois family, based? On capital, on private gain. In its completely developed form it exists only for the bourgeoisie. But it finds its complement in the forcible absence of the family among the proletarians and in public prostitution."

The Communists admit that they "want to abolish the exploitation of children by their parents."

They retort to the ever-current stupidity that "Communists want to introduce a community of wives," that, on the contrary it is the "present system of bourgeois marriage which is in reality a system of wives in common."[44] For the rest, it is self-evident that "the abolition of the present system of production must involve the abolition of the community of women arising out of that system, that is, of prostitution both official and unofficial."

To the further charge made by the nationalists that Communism is going to "abolish the Fatherland" the *Manifesto* replies that in present-day bourgeois society "the workers have no Fatherland." "One cannot take from them what they do not have."[45] On the contrary, as Engels pointed out, the ancient communal property in land has been, for all free men, "a real Fatherland, *i.e.* an inherited free communal property."[46]

The attitude of the proletariat of each country with regard to the so-called national interests depends upon the specific stage reached by the workers' movement in its development on a national and international scale:

"In so far as the exploitation of one individual by another is abolished, the exploitation of one nation by another is also abolished. With the disappearance

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44 This statement calls to mind the remark of a Turkish ambassador made to Voltaire that "you Christians keep your seraglios without any further expense in the houses of your friends" (reported by Hume in Essays XIX.). A similar statement is made by the De Goncourts as to the system of marriage prevailing among the bourgeoisie at their time.

45 The conclusion that the general notions of Fatherland, Religion, Morals, Loyalty to the Government etc. lose all meaning for the vast majority of the people, because "without property, they have no Fatherland, without Fatherland, everybody is against them, and they themselves must be up in arms against everybody," had already been brought forward by the bourgeois revolutionist *Brissot* in his *"Observations d'un républicain sur les différents systèmes d'amministration provinciales,"* 1787 (See Marx's excerpts in MEGA I, 6, pp. 616-17).

46 See Engels' article on "The Mark" (appendix to first German edition of *Socialism, Utopian and Scientific,* 1882).

of the antagonism between classes within the nation, the hostility of one nation to another will disappear."

Again, in reply to "the indictments levelled against Communism from a religious, philosophical, and generally, from an ideological standpoint," the *Manifesto* summarily points to the specific historical character of all human ideas:

"What else does the history of ideas prove than that intellectual production changes its character as material production is changed? The ruling ideas of an age have ever been only the ideas of the ruling class.

"When the ancient world was in decline, the ancient religions were conquered by Christianity. When Christian ideas succumbed in the 18th century to the ideas of Enlightenment, feudal society fought its death battle with the then revolutionary bourgeoisie. The ideas of religious liberty and freedom of conscience merely expressed the sway of free competition within the domain of knowledge."

To that fraction of the bourgeoisie which concedes that religious, moral, philosophical, political, legal ideas, etc., have been modified in the course of historical development, but at the same time reproaches Communism for abolishing the *eternal truths* common to all social conditions, such as freedom, justice, etc., for doing away with religion and morality altogether, instead of remoulding them—Marx replies that *even in this most general form, traditional ideas still retain a specific historical element.* They do not depend any longer on the definite form which class antagonisms have assumed in a given epoch of social development. They do depend, however, on the historical fact continuing through all these epochs—the existence of class antagonisms:

"Whatever form they may have taken, one fact is common to all past ages, *viz.* the exploitation of one part of society by the other. No wonder, then, that the social consciousness of all past ages, despite the multiplicity and variety it displays, moves within certain common forms, or general ideas, which cannot completely vanish except with the total disappearance of class antagonism.

"The Communist revolution is the most radical rupture with traditional property relations, no wonder, then, that its development involves the most radical rupture with traditional ideas."

IV. Principle of Revolutionary Change

Traditional theory of society, spread over several hundred years and split into many schools and currents, does not present itself to the present-day observer as a homogeneous entity. This is true even if we disregard the fundamental divergence which has appeared within bourgeois thought since the beginning of the 19th century, when a new and predominantly *historical* current opposed

itself—at first with a monopolistic claim, later only as a supplementary second form—to the hitherto prevailing *theoretical* approach.

The classical phase of bourgeois social theory, continuing into the first decades of the 19th century, is characterized by an unsophisticated generalization of the new bourgeois principles. Later, in the hands of the "vulgar" economists of the 19th century, this unsophisticated attitude became a more or less conscious tendency to represent the economic system of bourgeois society in contrast to its politics—or at least bourgeois production as distinguished from distribution—as a general and unchangeable form of all social life. Finally, the founders of modern "economics," and the corresponding schools of "general" or "formal" sociology, have even emphasized the "unspecific" treatment of their subject matter as the very criterion of their new and assumedly "disinterested" scientism. A more detailed analysis will be necessary to point out in each of these currents of modern bourgeois social theory the special manner in which the "a priori" of definite premises evolving out of the historical and class-conditioned position of all bourgeois science, penetrates into the methods and results of the investigator and into the concepts and propositions set up by the theorist.

A further complication is added by the fact that, in dealing with contemporary bourgeois social theory, we can often no longer exactly determine how far it already represents a reaction to the attack of the proletarian class. The origin of not a few among the most important of its later developments is to be directly traced to the Marxist theory. We mention particularly, from the last two generations of German sociologists, jurists, historians, and philosophers, *Tönnies* and *Stammler, Max Weber* and *Troeltsch, Scheler* and *Mannheim;* and among the economists, as not the most important but perhaps the most typical representative of this whole group—*Werner Sombart.* The manifold broken and distorted forms assumed by the controversy with Marxism, under the special conditions of German academic science, appear most strikingly in the last named German savant. Werner Sombart originally was—or at least believed himself to be—a thorough-going Marxist, but later, with the changing political and social conditions leading up to the present regime of a so-called "National Socialism" in Germany, changed heart and finally became an outright anti-Marxist.[47] Not-

47 We mention from the writings of Sombart, in which this development is reflected, the following:

1894 et seq. Review articles and books, Marxist in tendency; among them the first scientific appreciation of the third volume of *Capital* in *Archiv für soziale Bewegung,* VII.

1897. First edition of the book *Socialism and Social Movements in the 19th Century.* 1900, pamphlet, *Nevertheless! Theoretical and Historical Notes on the Labor Trade Union Movement.*

1924. Tenth and "fully revised" edition of the book *Socialism and Social Movements* under the changed title *Proletarian Socialism (Marxism).*

Subsequent to Hitler's accession to power a new book *German Socialism,* etc.

Compare also the articles on Sombart's career by Rosa Luxemburg in *Neue Zeit* XVIII, 2, pp. 740 et seq. ("The 'German science' behind the workers"), and by the present writer in *Archiv für die Geschichte des Sozialismus und der Arbeiterbewegung* XVI.

withstanding these distortions, the irresistible influence exercised by Marx's theory on all present-day bourgeois social science is clearly evident even in the later career of Sombart. As late as 1927, in the introduction to the third volume of his main economic work, he testified to the fact that "all that is good in this work is due to Marx."[48] One year later, at the Zürich Sociological Conference, he volunteered a "personal confession" that he had been a "convinced Marxist" up to 1894. On the same occasion he claimed to have been the first to enunciate the principle of the so-called "non-evaluative character of a genuine sociological science," and traced back the origin of this well-known doctrine of contemporary social research to the "contradiction" which had at that early time arisen within himself, *i.e* between his internal Marxist "conviction," and his worldly position as a "Royal Prussian University Professor."[49]

For all these reasons, in confronting the general principles of the Marxist theory with bourgeois science we shall not so much refer to the more recent displays of contemporary social thought in which their persisting difference is already modified to a certain extent by mutual interaction. We shall rather try to bring out the underlying fundamental contrast in that pure form in which it originally appeared in the classical and post-classical bourgeois writers of the 18th and early 19th centuries on the one hand, and in the writings of Marx and Engels on the other.

Classical bourgeois economists concern themselves with existing bourgeois society. They ingenuously regard society's basic relationships as having the immutable character of a genuine natural law, and are for just this reason unable to become aware of or to investigate scientifically any other than this actually given form of society.

Even when bourgeois social theorists appear to speak of other social forms, their real subject matter is still the prevailing form of bourgeois society whose main characteristics they find duplicated in all other forms. When they speak of "society" in general, we can still recognize, with only slight variations, in this figure of so-called general society the well-known features of present-day bourgeois society. This is most evident in the writings of the great founders of bourgeois social science in the 17th and 18th centuries and their followers, the German idealistic philosophers from Kant to Hegel, who naively used not only the term "society," but even the term "civil society" as a timeless concept.[50]

Even when bourgeois investigators speak of a historical "development" of society, they do not step beyond the magic circle of bourgeois society. They consider all the earlier forms as "preliminary stages" leading up to the present

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48 See Sombart, *Modern Capitalism,* volume III (1927) p. XIX ("und alles, was etwas Gutes in meinem Werke ist, verdankt es dem Geiste Marx").

49 See the record of the Proceedings of the Conference.

50 See Marx, *German Ideology* (MEGA I, 5, pp. 25-26).

more or less fully developed form of society. They constantly apply the concepts drawn from actual social conditions to the preceding historical forms. Right into the nineteenth century they describe those phases of primitive history which can not possibly be represented by the categories of modern bourgeois society, *i.e.* property, state, family, etc., as not belonging to history proper, but as merely "prehistoric." Even Johann Gottfried Herder, who stood in a much closer relation to real history than most of his contemporaries, wrote in his *Diary*: "How many ages may have passed by before we learned to know or think? The Phoenician? The Ethiopian? Or none of these? Are we then, with our Moses, in the right place?"[51]

Just as in their study of past conditions, so in their analysis of present tendencies, bourgeois social theorists remain tied to the bourgeois categories. They simply cannot conceive of any future changes other than those resulting from an "evolutionary" development, and which reveal no breach with the fundamental principles of the present-day bourgeois order of society. They regard all social revolutions as pathological interferences with "normal" social development.[52] They expect, after the revolutionary "cycle" has run its full course, pre-revolutionary *social conditions* to be re-established as unchanged in their fundamentals, as according to a similar theory (held by the politicians) *political conditions* of the ancien régime are finally re-established by the "Restoration." They hold all tendencies of revolutionary socialism and communism which aim at any thing beyond this, as mere "disturbance of healthy social progress" and, theoretically, as "unscientific" fantasies.

Marx's social science is fundamentally opposed to all these traditional concepts of classical bourgeois theory. This contrast is, however, not so simple that it can be reduced to the biblical formula "Let your speech be yea, yea—nay, nay." It would be altogether wrong, for instance, to imagine that since the bourgeois theory is the doctrine of a "bourgeois society," Marx's socialist theory must necessarily be the doctrine of a "socialist society." As a matter of fact, scientific socialism is not at all concerned with the painting of a future state of society. Marx leaves that to the sectarians of the old and new Utopias. He, according to his materialistic principle, deals with the real form of society which exists today, *i.e.,* bourgeois society. Thus Marx, as against the bourgeois "theorists" who continually tend to generalize in one way or another the facts they "discover," more nearly approaches the method of the classical bourgeois historians, from which however, in another direction, he kept himself all the more aloof through

51 See J. G. Herder, *Journal meiner Reise* 1769.

52 Thus Comte regarded revolutionary periods of society as analogous to disease in the human body. He did not, for this reason, ignore them totally but rather, following the physician Broussais (who first subjected the phenomena of disease to the laws governing healthy bodies) proclaimed the study of this *"pathologie sociale"* as a possible substitute for the experimental method used by the physicists.

his insistence upon a strictly theoretical form of scientific knowledge.

Nor is the bourgeois concept of developmental stages wholly repudiated by Marx. He plainly distinguishes the historical forms of "Asiatic," "Antique" and "Feudal" society, and groups them, together with modern "Bourgeois" society, into a series of *"progressive epochs of socio-economic formation."* Although he does no more regard, as the bourgeois theorists had done, all previous forms of society as mere preliminary steps to its present and final formation, still he indulges in the statement that the present form of society is itself merely the last of a series of preliminary steps and, as it were, "concludes the pre-history of a really human society."[53] He does not raise a fundamental objection to the extension of scientific concepts derived from the present bourgeois state of society to the conditions of past historical epochs. He explicitly states the principle that the categories of bourgeois society as the "most developed and most complex historical organization of production," furnish a key to the understanding of earlier epochs of social and economic formation.[54] He even indorsed, in his early years, the "correct idea" underlying that "common fiction of the 18th century, which regarded the primitive state of man as the true state of human nature."[55] It is true that he later replaced this revolutionary slogan of the 18th century, and the fresh impetus which it had in the meantime received through the first great discoverers of primitive society in the 19th century, by the more sober principles of a strictly empirical and materialistic research. However, he did not even then abandon the underlying idea but rather reshaped it in a critical spirit and gave it a new and fruitful application. In the same way even the bourgeois idea of "evolution" was not completely wiped out in Marx's theory of a social revolution. Just as there is—in spite of all the intervening revolutions, and in fact, realized just by these revolutions—one progressive line of development leading up from the historic and "pre-historic" past to the contemporary form of bourgeois society, so will the future socialist and communist society, springing from the social revolution, though involving a fundamental transformation of the present-day bourgeois order, still remain, according to Marx, an outgrowth of existing conditions of society.

V. Principle of Revolutionary Practice (Praxis)

The Marxist critique of the developmental concept of bourgeois social science starts from a recognition of the illusionary character of that *"so-called*

53 See *Preface,* 1859.

54 See Introduction, 1857, p. 776.

55 See "The Philosophical Manifesto of the Historical School of Law," in *Rheinische Zeitung,* 1842, No. 221, Supplement (MEGA I, 1, p. 251): "The correct idea underlying all these eccentricities (of the Historical School) is that those *primitive* conditions are naive, 'Dutch pictures' of the *real* conditions."

historical evolution," according to which *"the last stage regards the preceding stages as being only preliminary to itself, and therefore can only look at them onesidedly."*[56] Just where Marx seems to adopt this naive pseudo-Darwinian metaphysics of evolution, which later was fully and blindly accepted by such orthodox Marxists as Kautsky,[57] and on account of which such heterodox Marxists as Georges Sorel have altogether denied any application of the principle of evolution to scientific sociology,[58] he actually reverses the whole conception and thereby destroys its metaphysical character. While bourgeois evolutionists imagine, with Spencer, that they can explain the more complex organization of the higher types both of animal species and social forms by reference to the simpler organization of the lower, Marx breaks up this illusion with the paradoxical statement that *"the anatomy of man is a key to the anatomy of the ape."*[59]

This critical consciousness breaks the magic spell of the metaphysical "law" of evolution. From a valid "a priori" axiom, it is reduced to a working hypothesis which must be empirically verified in each case. Even though bourgeois society does provide a "key" to ancient society, it does not therefore follow that such categories as commodity, money, state, law, etc., must have the same meaning for ancient society and its mode of production as they have for modern capitalist production and for the bourgeois society which is based upon it. Thus, the path is made free for a strictly empirical research. Bourgeois society may contain the relations of earlier societies in a further developed form. It may contain them as well in degenerate, stunted and travestied forms (as, *e.g.,* the communal property of primitive times, according to Marx, was contained in a travestied form in the Russia "Mir").[60] It likewise contains within itself the germs of future developments of present society, though by no means their complete determination. The false idealistic concept of evolution as applied by bourgeois social theorists, is *closed* on both sides, and in all past and future forms of society rediscovers only itself. The new, critical and materialistic Marxist principle of development is, on the other hand, *open* on both sides. Marx does not deal with Asiatic, Antique, or Feudal society, and still less with those primitive societies which preceded all written history, merely as "preliminary stages" of contemporary society. He regards them, in their totality, as so many independent historical formations which are to be understood in terms of their own categories.

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56 See *Introduction,* 1857, pp. 776-77.

57 See the author's *The Materialistic Conception of History* (*A Critical Examination of the Work of Karl Kautsky*) Leipzig 1929, pp. 32 *et seq.*

58 See *Introduction à l'èconomie moderne,* 1903; also *Illusions du progrés,* 3rd ed., pp. 239-44.

59 See *Introduction,* 1857, p. 776.

60 *Ibidem.*

In the same way he defines the socialist and communist society arising out of the proletarian revolution not only as a further developed form of bourgeois society, but as a new type which is no longer to be basically explained by any of the bourgeois categories. Marx's quarrel with the *Utopian socialists* is not, as many have imagined, inspired by their idea of a future state, totally different from that of contemporary bourgeois society, leaving out the shadows. All such utopian schemes will, when worked out in detail and put into practice, inevitably reproduce only the same old bourgeois form of society we know so well.[61] On the other hand, Marxism, while carefully avoiding a detailed painting of future stages of development, nevertheless endeavors, in its materialistic analysis and critique of the specific historical features of contemporary bourgeois society, to find the main tendencies of the further development leading up, first to that transitional stage which is opened by the proletarian revolution, and ultimately, to that further advanced stage which Marx calls the *completely developed communistic society*. Communistic society in its "first phase," as it is just emerging from the womb of bourgeois society after long labor pains, is still in many ways, in its economic, political, legal, intellectual and moral structure, determined by bourgeois principles. Communistic society in its "second phase," where it has already developed on its own basis, will be as far remote from the principles of present-day bourgeois society, as, in the other direction, the classless and stateless "primitive communism" of the earliest epochs of human society is removed from contemporary society. Communistic society, when it is fully developed, will have left the narrow bourgeois horizon far behind and will ultimately realize the slogan which, in an abstract form, was first enunciated by the "utopian" pioneers on the threshold of the 19th century: "From each according to his abilities, to each according to his needs."[62]

To the philosophical dialectic of Hegel, which he otherwise regarded as the perfected instrument of a *developmental investigation of society,* Marx raised the objection that, in the "mystified form" in which it became fashionable in Germany, it "seemed to glorify existing conditions." On the other hand, the new and rational form in which this Hegelian dialectic reappears in Marxist social research, has become "a scandal and abomination to the bourgeoisie and its doctrinaire spokesmen; because it includes in its positive understanding of existing conditions at the same time an understanding of their negation and of their necessary disintegration; because it conceives of every form manifested as being in the flux of movement, *i.e.,* also from its transitory aspect; because it lets nothing impose upon it, and because it is essentially critical and revolutionary."[63]

61 See Marx, *Class struggles in France,* Section III (first appeared in *Neue Rheinische Zeitung, Politisch-ökonomische Revue,* Hamburg 1850).
62 See Marx, "Marginal Notes to the Program of the German Labor Party 1875" (*Neue Zeit* IX, 1, p. 567).
63 See Marx, *Postscript,* 1873.

The outstanding difference between Marx and Hegel in this respect, is evident without a more detailed analysis. Hegel, who glorified existing institutions and moderate progress within the narrow confines of the contemporary Prussian State,[64] explicitly limited the validity of his dialectical principle to the *past* development of society and consigned future progress in a purposely irrational manner to the "mole, burrowing below the surface."[65] Again, though criticizing the so-called "Pre-formation Hypothesis," according to which all future forms are already physically contained in those that precede them, he emphasized at the same time the correctness of the idea underlying this hypothesis, *i.e.,* the assumption that social development "remains by itself in its process and that by such a development no new content is brought about, but only a change of form." Development is, therefore, according to Hegel, "only to be regarded as if it were a play; the something else which is set by it, is in fact nothing else."[66] It is evident that from this standpoint which, in its unyielding Hegelian formula, amounts almost to an involuntary criticism of the principle of evolution as used by the bourgeois social investigators, there is no room for the *conscious human-social act,* which will radically transform and overthrow the present order of society. Hegel said, concerning the real "purpose" of all historical action, that "it is already fulfilled in truth, and need not wait for us." Its actual performance, then, only "removes the semblance as if it were not yet performed."[67] Hence, in contrast to some of his followers, who later on actually tried to use his dialectical method as an instrument for revolution, Hegel considered the only purpose of his philosophy to be to "re-establish" the conviction from which "every unsophisticated consciousness proceeds": *"What is reasonable is real, and what is real is reasonable,"* and thus to bring about the final *"reconciliation"* between "reason as self-conscious mind" and "reason as a given reality."[68]

It is here that we face the most important consequence of the total destruction of bourgeois evolutionary metaphysics which is implied in Marx's materialistic criticism of the Hegelian idealist dialectic. Marx's study of society is based upon a full recognition of the *reality of historical change.* Marx treats all conditions of existing bourgeois society as changing, *i.e.,* more exactly, as conditions in the process of being changed by human actions. Bourgeois society is not, according to Marx, a general entity which can be replaced by another stage in a historical movement. It is both the result of an earlier phase and the starting point of a new phase, of the social class war which is leading to a social revolution.

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64 See Hegel's address to his audience on the occasion of his opening lecture in Berlin on Oct. 22, 1818.

65 See the peroration of Hegel's lectures on the History of Philosophy (1817-1830).

66 See Hegel, *Encyclopaedia* I §161 (1818-1827).

67 *Ibidem,* addition to §212.

68 See Hegel, *Preface to Philosophy of Law* (1820).

Changes in Types of Monopoly

BY G. REIMANN

POST-WAR imperialism has produced new features of capitalism in decay whose importance it is necessary to recognize. The unequal development of capitalism has led to an extraordinary growth of monopolies. These monopolies, however, are mainly "national monopolies," and they have grown much more in the minor imperialist countries (the "have-nots") than in those major imperialist countries possessing the largest colonial monopolies and foreign investments ("the haves"). But national monoplies, and international monoplies (finance capital based on foreign investment), produce very unlike effects upon the class structure and class relations of imperialist countries. Hence the need for a special analysis of the different types of monopoly.[1]

The fundamental difference between national and international, or colonial, monopolies appears to be quite simple: national monopoly controls the national market, while international, or colonial, monopoly is in control of foreign markets or of the world market or of production in colonial countries. This distinction leads to the conclusion that national monopoly gets its monopolist or extra profits from the home country while international or colonial monopoly gets them from foreign countries. National monopoly uses its power to exploit the peoples at home, while international monopoly exploits foreign peoples.

This distinction does not quite correspond to the term "international monopoly" as it is often used, *e.g.* there are international cartels and syndicates which are merely mutual agreements of national monopolies not to disturb control of the national market by the particular national monopoly of the other country. The most important fact about the International Steel Cartel is that the German, French, Belgian and, since 1935, the British steel manufacturers agreed to acknowledge and not to disturb control of the home markets by the national steel cartels or syndicates. This is an international understanding to protect or to

1 The most important pre-war studies of imperialism were J. A. Hobson's *Imperialism* and Rudolf Hilferding's *Das Finanzkapital.* Both authors generalised mainly the peculiar features of their country, of British imperialism (Hobson) where international monopolies were predominant, and of German imperialism (Hilferding) where powerful national monopolies already existed. Lenin summarised the features of both types of imperialism, but he did not distinguish between the different effects of international and national monopolies. The development of the theory of imperialism will be dealt with in another article.

strengthen the dictatorship of national monopolies. The original agreement of the International Steel Cartel included a degree of control of the world market. This would make of the International Steel Cartel a real international monopoly, but those regulations were not effective during the world economic crisis of the 1930's. In spite of this the Cartel compelled each of its members not to interfere in the national market of other members and to guarantee full control of each national market by its own cartel.

International and colonial monopolies both exist at the expense of foreign countries. Colonial monopolies or investments exploit the colonial peoples under their dominion. International raw material monopolies obtain their tribute from the consumers of the whole world, from producers in the colonial countries as well as from consumers in the industrial countries or foreign capitalists who are dependent on the raw materials furnished by the international monopoly.

The development of industrialism destroyed the international monopolies which were in existence during the first stage of capitalism. These international monopolies were based on the control of foreign trade by one power or on the industrial monopoly of Great Britain which was destroyed during the second part of the nineteenth century. But a new kind of international monopoly came into existence: the control of raw material resources on which the world market is dependent, the control of colonial countries and of corresponding fields of investment.

In the era of mass production and of cheap mass transportation the raw material resources of backward or colonial countries are utilized to supply all industrial countries. Those capitalist groups which are in control of raw material resources are able to control the world market and set prices which assure an extra or monopolist profit. They are willing to sell their goods to industrial capitalists of the whole world but only on condition that the buyer is willing to pay a tribute to the monopolists. Therefore the struggle for control of raw material resources has nothing to do with their "scarcity." All capitalists can buy as many raw materials as they like, but the decisive question is whether they can pay for them and whether they will pay the price of the monopoly. Another consideration is the delivery of raw materials in time of war. The international struggle of the imperialists for control of raw materials is not a struggle for a great supply of raw materials by countries with insufficient national resources; it is a struggle for international control of raw material resources, for the conquest of, or participation in, the international monopolies which compel buyers everywhere to pay tribute to the monopoly.

Foreign sources of raw materials can be opened to the world market only by investment, or export, of capital: construction of railways and ports, opening of mines, etc. and development of subsidiary industries. Finance capital takes advantage of cheap labor in colonial and economically backward countries,

which provide favorable general conditions for the utilization of capital. In the production of raw materials and agricultural products the part played by human labor in determining costs is much greater than in the production of manufactured goods. The organic composition of capital in the production of raw materials and agricultural products is relatively low (much variable capital or wages, little constant capital or mechanical equipment and materials). In colonial or economically backward countries wages are lower (*i.e.* labor is cheaper) than in the imperialist "mother country." Hence finance capital prefers colonial countries for investment in production of goods requiring large expenditures on wages or variable capital. Thus international "division of labor" enables capitalism to utilize cheap labor in colonial countries and to reduce dependence on higher-cost labor in the imperialist "mother country."

International finance capital obtains extra profits which increase the total income of the entire capitalist class. Foreign investments are controlled by small groups of financial capitalists. But their profits reduce the competitive pressure for all capitalists of the imperialist country by increasing the parasitic consumption of the capitalist class. It has often been claimed that the export of capital reduces the expansion of industrial investments or industrial development in the country exporting capital. This is only partly true. It is true only in those cases where export of capital is not connected with the export of industrial goods and where incomes derived from foreign investments are spent for financing new investments abroad. Numerous industrial capitalists participate in the export of capital by investing their savings in shares or debentures of forcign or colonial enterprises. The buying power of foreign countries is increased by the import of foreign capital. The economic and political influence of the state or of the capitalist groups exporting capital is utilized to increase special advantages of industrial capitalists who are interested in exports of industrial goods, so that they can obtain extra profits. Finally, another factor enables industrial capitalism to take advantage of export of capital or of foreign investments: the "tribute" or profits from foreign investments and international monopolies lead to the growth of a class of rentiers and to an increase of parasitic consumption in the imperialist country. The home sale of consumption goods can be extended, making possible the existence of numerous industries producing consumption goods, with a relatively large proportion of small producers and independent artisans who supply the rentier or parasitic class with consumption goods or "entertainment" and "amusement."

There are, however, imperialist powers which have no colonial or international monopolies or only unimportant ones. They are fighting for the conquest and possession of such monopolies. Their decisive weapon against those imperialist powers which monopolise colonial markets or raw material resources are national monopolies or the development of national productive forces which

lessen dependence on foreign international monopolies.

A good illustration of this development is German nitrate (synthetic nitrate) production. In pre-war times Germany was dependent on the import of nitrates from Chile, where British finance capital was in control of the industry. This British international monopoly was destroyed during the World War when the German chemical trust began to produce synthetic nitrates. After the World War German synthetic nitrates were able to compete successfully in the world market with Chilean nitrates. The German chemical trust achieved a new international monopoly. But this international monopoly was soon reduced to a pure national monopoly; most countries subsidized the development of a "national" industry for the production of synthetic nitrates in order to assure the production of explosives in war time. The international or colonial monopolies of imperialism are partially destroyed by the formation of national monopolies which are used by the "have not" imperialists for the destruction or undermining of monopolies of the "have" imperialists.

National monopolies, unlike international or colonial monopolies, do not increase the total amount of surplus value or profits at the disposal of the capitalist class; they merely alter the distribution of those profits among the capitalists. For national monopolies are able to increase their incomes by means of monopolist profits only at the cost of all other capitalists whose share of profits will be correspondingly reduced. National monopolies reduce the rate of profit among the capitalists of their own country who have no monopolist power. These national monopolies compel all consumers in the home country to pay them an extra profit or tribute. They cannot compel the consumers of foreign countries to pay them a tribute, because the power of the monopoly is geographically limited. Finance capital deriving its income from national monopolies centralizes the surplus value and national income, thereby reducing the incomes of all other strata of the population. While international or colonial monopolies create more favorable conditions for the expansion of the rentier middle class and of the labor aristocracy, national monopolies tend to have the reverse effect. The rate of profit of the independent or non-monopoly capitalists is decreased, consumption declines and the industrial market is narrowed. Competition between independent capitalists becomes fiercer and the pressure to reduce wages is intensified. Such developments limit the conditions of the existence of a labor aristocracy, while the middle classes become poorer and are unable to save.

The industrial structure of the imperialist country where national monopolies are predominant will be measurably different from that of an imperialist country in possession of powerful and extensive international monopolies. Income from foreign investments increases home consumption and is favorable to the development of industries satisfying the increased demand for luxury consumption. National monopolies, however, diminish the class of pure rentiers or parasitic

consumers and national consumption in general. In countries where national monopolies are predominant they are in control of most home-made raw materials. Manufacturing capitalists are dependent on supplies from the national monopolies while they are not able (and even forbidden by the state, as *i.e.* in Nazi Germany) to form their own monopolies which would resist the dictatorship of the national raw material monopolies. The antagonism between the increased production of means of production and the limited production of consumption goods is aggravated by the predominance of national monopolies. That predominance enables and even compels finance capital to accelerate the accumulation of industrial capital at home. The extra profits which are secured by national monopolies make national industrial investments attractive to finance capital. This leads to an expansion of the national industries producing means of production in contradiction to the limited production of consumption goods. The predominance of national monopolies reduces the buying power of consumers and lessens consumption.

Today national monopolies are particularly powerful in Germany. Germany's answer to those countries which can rely upon profits derived from colonies and foreign investment is the creation of national monopolies more powerful than those of any other country. These serve the "have-not" imperialisms as their resources for financing a new struggle for world power and for a repartition of the world. But there is another factor involving national monopolies in the drive toward greater armaments and war. A large percentage of the capital invested in national monopolies would becomes useless if militarism and rearmament do not increase the market for their products. From the economic point of view the armaments which are bought by the state for war purposes are neither consumption goods nor means of production. They are means of waging war to destroy human beings and material goods. They become useless if they cannot be used for destruction. In the proportion that war materials are bought by the state, production and sales of these war goods can be increased by increasing state purchases; the antagonism between the expansion of industries producing means of production and the limited market for consumption goods can be temporarily diminished. But only temporarily.

The Costs of Depression

BY LEWIS COREY

Depression piles up all kinds of costs in the shape of economic, social and human losses. The economic costs are of many types, two of which are the subject of this article:

1. The losses in the output of goods and services and in the potential productive capacity of society.

2. The losses in the earnings of business enterprise involving a downward movement in the mass of profits and the rate of profit.

These are the fundamental economic costs. Losses in the output of goods and services mean a decline in social well-being. But they also mean a decline in the capacity of business enterprise to earn profits, the real purpose of capitalist production. One is related to the other; they express an inability of capitalism to fully utilize all its productive forces and capital.

But that inability is evident, too, in periods of the most flourishing prosperity; there is always, although in varying degree, an unused capacity to produce and an incomplete utilization of capital, which is bound up with the tendency of the rate of profit to fall (even if the mass of profits is rising). Hence the catastrophic limitation of production, capital utilization and profits by cyclical crisis and depression is simply the magnification of a condition that is the normal aspect of cyclical prosperity. The costs of depression may be abnormally large but they are not abnormal in their nature, just as depressions in general are not abnormal since they are an inherent and recurrent phase of capitalist production. The costs of depression reveal all the economic entanglements of capitalism and the forces that are driving it toward decline and decay.

I. Goods, Services and Productive Capacity

Losses in the output of goods and services, measured in terms of the decrease of the real national income, were enormous during the depression of the 1930's (Table I). They were greater than in any previous depression: in an absolute sense, of course, but in a relative sense too. While there are no comparable statistics the greater relative losses are clearly evident in the unprecedented scope,

TABLE I.—OUTPUT OF GOODS AND SERVICES, 1924-35
(Millions of Dollars—1929 Prices)

Prosperity Years		*Depression Years*			
Year	Actual Income	Year	Actual Income	Possible Income	Income Losses
1924	$71,570	1930	$74,744	$83,988	$ 9,244
1925	75,315	1931	66,800	86,087	19,287
1926	77,254	1932	57,000	88,239	31,239
1927	78,335	1933	59,000	90,444	31,444
1928	79,759	1934	60,400	92,705	32,305
1929	81,940	1935	64,900	95,022	30,122
Total	$464,173		$382,844	$536,485	$153,641

Source and methods of computation: The income figures for 1924-34 are from H. G. Moulton, *Income and Economic Progress,* p. 176; the 1935 income is estimated. Income is realized income from production of goods and services plus business savings but exclusive of speculative profits. "Possible income" figures are secured by applying to the years 1930-35 the yearly average rate of increase in national income of 2.5 percent prevailing in 1923-29.

depth and duration of this depression. In the six years 1930-35 there was a loss of $153,641 million in goods and services that might have been produced if prosperity had not broken down in 1929.[1]

The losses in real national income of six depression years were nearly equal to the combined national income of the two prosperity years 1928-29. They were eighteen times the amount of the increase in the national income 1924-29 and more than three times the money costs of American participation in the World War (including loans to the Allies and the continuing costs since the peace in the form of interest and veteran payments).

Those depression losses were not the result of a reaction against an unusually high rate of increase, which could not be normally maintained, in the national income and in the output of goods and services during the prosperity years. A considerable proportion of the American capacity to produce was unused, because it was unprofitable, while millions of our people lived in poverty moving downward to sheer destitution. Nor was the yearly rate of increase of 2.5% in the national income in 1924-29 any too great, considering the high development of our economic plant, the increasing productivity of labor and population growth. The increase in the national income and in wages and salaries was small; what was large, and disproportionate, was the increase in financial and speculative profits (Table II), expressing an increasing exploitation of the American economy by finance capital and an accumulation of the elements of ill-balance

1 Although 1933-34 were recovery years and 1935 was in the prosperity phase of the cycle, they are included in this calculation because recovery is still depression, although moving upward, while the prosperity of 1935 was incomplete and below the 1929 levels: the economic losses continued, if on a smaller scale.

TABLE II.—NATIONAL INCOME, WAGES AND SALARIES, AND DIVIDENDS, INTEREST AND PROFITS, 1925-29
(Millions of Dollars)

	National Income		*Wages and Salaries*		*Dividends and Interest*		*Non-financial Profits*		*Financial Profits*		*Speculative Profits*	
Years	Amount	Index	Amount	Index	Amount	Index	Amount	Index	Amount	Index	Amount	Index
1923	$69,553	110.0	$39,271	100.0	$6,577	100.0	$6,484	100.0	$ 900	100.0	$1,172	100.0
1924	71,437	102.7	40,615	103.4	6,869	104.4	4,580	70.7	1,049	116.6	1,513	129.1
1925	78,850	113.4	42,985	109.4	7,631	116.0	6,821	105.2	1,592	176.9	2,932	250.2
1926	79,555	114.5	45,197	115.1	8,428	128.1	6,946	107.1	1,498	166.4	2,378	202.9
1927	77,003	110.7	45,520	115.9	9,141	139.0	6,113	94.3	1,739	193.2	2,894	246.8
1928	84,486	121.5	46,433	118.2	9,739	148.1	7,170	110.6	2,263	251.4	4,807	410.1
1929	86,624	124.6	48,913	124.5	10,688	162.5	7,916	122.1	2,545	282.8	4,684	399.7

Source and methods of computation: National income is realized production income as estimated in Brookings Institution, *America's Capacity to Consume*, p. 152, to which are added the speculative profits in the final column of this table.

Wages and salaries are from the Brookings study, p. 155, less the salaries of officers of corporations; all other figures (including speculative profits) are computed from U. S. Department of the Treasury, Bureau of Internal Revenue, *Statistics of Income* for the respective years.

Corporate profits are net profits after tax of corporations reporting net income less income from tax-exempt government securities and dividends from intercorporate stockholdings in the case of non-financial corporations but including such dividends in the case of financial corporations.

Speculative profits are realized monetary gains, reported by individuals for income tax purposes, from sale of real estate, stocks and bonds and capital net gains from sale of assets held more than two years; these profits are underreported, according to an estimate of Maurice Leven, by 65 percent.

that moved irresistibly toward disaster. Prosperity broke down because of the usual recurrent cyclical reaction, although all the social and technical-economic factors were present for a continuation of the increase in the output of goods and services: human wants, productive equipment, raw materials and labor.

The human losses of the depression, especially the social-psychological effects of unemployment, project themselves into the future. So does the depression deficiency in adding to our capacity to produce. Capital formation, the additions to productive equipment, moved disastrously downward in 1930-34; it was probably not more than 20% of what it was during the five preceding prosperity years. Our capacity to produce might have been increased, roughly, by one-fifth if prosperity had not broken down. And that means a continuing deprival in the future of socially necessary goods and services: a relative decline in standards of living that moves toward an absolute decline.

One of the most substantial continuing losses of the depression was the decline in residential construction which, according to one estimate, dropped from $16,000 million in 1924-29 to $4,400 million in 1930-34 (1929 prices), a loss almost equal to the total residential construction of the five prosperity years. In physical terms the construction of urban dwelling units dropped from 2,435,-522 in 1924-29 to 354,633 in 1930-35,[2] a loss of more than 2,000,000 units that might have been built in answer to definite needs. (The losses are still larger if it is considered that pre-depression residential construction lagged far behind the need for housing and that it declined steadily in 1926-29 in comparison with 1925.) The depression added to our shortage of homes and our slums, while the "new prosperity" neither changed that condition nor is capable of changing it.

These immense losses[3] make a mock of bourgeois economic theory, which offers no real explanation of cyclical crises and depression since it cannot admit that they are inherent in capitalist production. Yet the bourgeois economists are busily arguing that socialist planning is inefficient and must be inefficient. One group favors the "planning" of state capitalism while another group rejects all planning. The former is answered by the American experience, for however useful the separate bits of "planning" it has not assured complete recovery and

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2 Estimate of the U. S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. The figures cover 257 cities with population of 25,000 up; their total population during the twelve years grew from around 40,000,000 to 48,000,000.

3 Losses were greatest in the United States, both in an absolute and relative sense, precisely because of its higher economic development. But the losses of all other capitalist nations were also great. According to the League of Nations, *World Economic Survey 1932-33,* p. 82: "If the line of trend from 1860 to 1913 is extended to 1932 the rather startling conclusion is reached that the index of world production, on the hypothesis that nothing had occured to alter its regular upward trend for the fifty preceding years, would today be rather more than twice as great as it actually is. While such a conclusion must remain highly speculative, it affords some measure of the cost to the world of the disturbances to the productive organization." And it must be borne in mind that the "line" from 1860 to 1913 was itself interrupted and perceptibly "flattened" by a series of cyclical crises and depressions.

prosperity, while the European experience shows that the "planning" of state capitalism moves toward the fascist "planning" of rearmament, new and more destructive wars, and enslavement of the working class. The rejecters of all planning are enmeshed in the abstractions of a capitalism that never was and never will be, while they conveniently forget the inefficiency and waste of capitalist production: the unused capacity in prosperity and its catastrophic increase in depression.

The waste of capitalism is probably as great as its efficiency, and they are inseparable. Never was the technical-economic efficiency of American capitalism as great as in 1929-35 and never was economic waste as great. Cyclical waste (and other forms of waste) is necessary to capitalist production; crises and depressions are the forcible means that liquidate, temporarily, the ill-balance which increasingly undermines and eventually tears down prosperity, thus preparing the conditions for a new economic upsurge. But there is one new and decisive change: *cyclical waste in the past was an element of growth,* for recovery moved to higher levels of prosperity; *now cyclical waste in an element of decline and decay,* for recovery moves to lower levels of prosperity.

2. Profits and the Rate of Profit

The logic of capitalism is indifferent to the production of goods and services *as such,* for they are simply a by-product of accumulation. Production is deliberately limited by monopoly and state capitalism to insure profits. In the 1920's financial and speculative profits increased much more than industrial profits. But it is the fatal contradiction of capitalist production that the tendency of accumulation to limit production and consumption eventually undermines prosperity and profits. Profits stall when production stalls on a large scale. Limitation of output is profitable only within definite limits. That is also true of earnings losses: they are in prosperity a necessary condition for the profits of others, but earnings losses of depression create a shrinkage in the profits of all enterprises.

The depression of the 1930's made havoc with corporate profits[4] (Table III). The profits of all corporations (profits of corporations reporting net income less deficits of corporations reporting no net income) dropped in 1930 to 13% of the 1925 level and were converted into losses during the remaining depression

4 Corporate profits only are used here because the statistical material is most abundant and because corporate enterprise dominates economic activity. It must be borne in mind that the profits figures are approximations, for their absolute amounts are affected *e.g.* by accounting methods used to calculate corporate income for tax purposes, while there is some duplication in the amount of losses. But that is unimportant, especially in measuring profit *trends* over a period of years. Absolute accuracy is impossible and unnecessary. The statisticians who yearn after absolute accuracy are entangled in methodology for its own sake, they forget that the theoretical analysis is decisive and that statistical approximations serve the purpose of illustrating the analysis.

TABLE III.—CORPORATE PROFITS AND DEFICITS, 1925-34
(Millions of Dollars)

Year	Profits—All Corporations	Index	Profits—Net Income Corporations	Index	Total Deficits	Index
1925	$6,451	100.0	$ 8,413	100.0	$1,962	100.0
1926	6,275	97.3	8,444	100.4	2,168	110.5
1927	5,380	83.4	7,852	93.3	2,471	126.0
1928	7,042	109.2	9,433	112.1	2,391	121.9
1929	7,547	117.0	10,461	124.3	2,914	148.6
1930	840	13.0	5,717	67.9	4,877	248.7
1931	3,680*	*	3,284	39.0	6,970	355.5
1932	5,929*	*	1,867	22.2	7,796	397.3
1933	2,970*	*	2,563	30.4	5,533	282.2
1934	1,000*	*	3,500	41.6	4,500	229.5

* Deficit.

Source and methods of computation: Computed from material in U. S. Treasury Department, Bureau of Internal Revenue, *Statistics of Income* for the respective years. Profits—net profits, after deducting tax, less income from tax-exempt government securities and dividends on intercorporate stockholdings. Profits and deficits for 1934 are estimated.

years. The profits of corporations reporting net income dropped in 1932 to 22% of the 1925 level. Total deficits, rising during the prosperity years proportionately more than profits, were in 1932 four times as great as in 1925. Unlike prosperity, production losses in depression involve still greater profit losses.[5] The effects, of course, were unequal, some industries and enterprises faring better than others; the influence of that unequal movement is important but its analysis is beyond the scope of this article, the fundamental feature, however, being this: the collapse of production and profits in the capital goods industries brings about a similar collapse in the consumption goods industries. . . .

Still more striking and suggestive is the movement of profits and losses during the ten-year period 1925-34—five years of prosperity and five years of depression. Total corporate losses amounted to $41,582 million compared with total profits of $61,534 million, the losses being equal to 67% of the profits. (That is exclusive of interest, which, however, was a gain to its recipients.) *For every $10 of profit American corporations sustained losses of $7.* The unprofitability of profit is becoming a menace to American capitalist enterprise.

Losses are partly reflected in the movement of corporate surplus; it rose from $37,863 million in 1925 to $55,111 million in 1929 but dropped to $35,096

5 The recipients of interest and dividends did not suffer as much as the collapse of profits would indicate. Corporate interest and dividend payments amounted to approximately $47,000 million in the prosperity years 1925-29 and to $37,000 million in the depression years 1930-34. That was largely a result of corporations continuing to pay interest and dividends out of accumulated surplus despite the profit losses. Corporations take paternalistic care of their investors, to the devil with rugged individualism!

million in 1933. Inventory was reduced from $21,910 million in 1929 to $13,597 in 1933 and cash from $22,000 million to $15,326 million.[6] Because of the depression drain upon its resources the American corporate system was on the verge of collapse early in 1933, and it was saved only by government intervention: clearly the symptom of a declining economy.

Capitalist production is a perpetual struggle against the tendency of the rate of profit to fall below the mass of profits and capitalization. That downward pressure is all the greater as capitalism moves toward economic maturity (within the limits of its class-and-profit relations), as capital and capital claims pile up, variable capital falls still farther below constant capital, and the expansive force of gigantic new industries and industrialization of new territories is increasingly restricted. In years of prosperity the rate of profit tends to fall although the mass of profits may be rising, and that was evident in 1925-29 (Table IV), despite

TABLE IV.—RATE OF PROFIT, ALL CORPORATIONS, 1925-34
(Millions of Dollars)

Year	Net Profits	Capitalization	Rate of Profit	Capital Assets	Rate of Profit
1925	$6,451	$115,910	5.6	$ 87,919	7.3
1926	6,275	119,259	5.3	97,523	6.4
1927	5,380	132,401	4.1	104,945	5.1
1928	7,042	142,887	4.9	109,931	6.4
1929	7,547	160,368	4.7	116,446	6.5
1930	840	161,281	0.5	120,994	0.7
1931	3,686*	143,262	2.6*	115,302	3.2*
1932	5,929*	133,567	4.4*	108,553	5.5*
1933	2,970*	127,576	2.3*	104,958	2.8*
1934	1,000*	133,000	0.7*	108,000	0.9*

* Deficit.

Source and methods of computation: Computed from material in U. S. Department of the Treasury, Bureau of Internal Revenue, *Statistics of Income* for the respective years (1934 estimated pending release of the 1934 corporation income tax returns). Profits—as in Table III. Capitalization—capital stock *plus* surplus. Capital assets—land, buildings and equipment.

the invigorating of profits by the growth of new industries and the export of capital: for every year after 1925 to 1929 the rate of profit was smaller than in the earlier year, and in all these years the rate was smaller than in 1923, on both capitalization and capital assets. In the depression years the rate of profit was smashed to pieces by the collapse in the mass of profits.

The fall in the rate of profit is a long-time tendency[7] that is sharpened by

6 See U. S. Department of the Treasury, Bureau of Internal Revenue, *Statistics of Income* for the respective years. Corporate ownership of government tax-exempt securities, however, rose from $10,226 million in 1929 to $13,570 million in 1933. The revenue from these tax-exempts materially helped corporations to pay interest and dividends that were not earned: the majority of society being taxed for the benefit of a small minority of investors.

7 Wesley C. Mitchell, in Ralph C. Epstein's *Industrial Profits in the United States,* p. 24,

cyclical breakdown. For the five years 1925-29 the rate rate of profit (all corporations) averaged 4.9% on capitalization and 6.3% on capital assets; for four of the five depression years the rate was minus. Straining to maintain itself in prosperity, the rate of profit is temporarily annihilated by depression. That lowers the general rate over the years. For the ten-year period under discussion:

The rate of profit on capitalization was 1.4%.

The rate of profit on capital assets was 1.8%.

About the same picture is presented by industrial corporations alone (Table V), except that the rate of profit for the ten-year period was somewhat higher

TABLE V.—RATE OF PROFIT, INDUSTRIAL CORPORATIONS, 1925-34
(Millions of Dollars)

Year	Net Profits	Capitalization	Rate of Profit	Capital Assets	Rate of Profit
1925	$4,596	$ 79,217	5.8	$68,249	6.7
1926	4,802	82,091	5.8	75,938	6.3
1927	3,845	90,205	4.3	80,732	4.8
1928	4,963	94,640	5.2	83,314	6.0
1929	5,820	101,990	5.7	88,560	6.6
1930	1,631	102,103	1.6	92,202	1.8
1931	1,102*	93,109	1.2*	87,836	1.3*
1932	2,481*	87,914	2.8*	82,768	3.0*
1933	913*	85,444	1.1*	81,113	1.1*
1934	250*	88,500	0.3*	82,500	0.3*

* Deficit.

Source and method of computation: Computed from material in U. S. Department of the Treasury, Bureau of Internal Revenue, *Statistics of Income* for the respective years (1934 estimated pending release of the 1934 corporation income tax returns). Profits—as in Table III Capitalization and capital assets—as in Table IV. Industrial corporations—mining and quarrying, manufacturing, construction, and transportation and other public utilities.

than for all corporations—2.3% on capitalization and 2.5% on capital assets. It appears that this higher rate is largely the result of industrial corporations incurring lower depression losses than financial corporations: an assertion, despite the dominance of finance capital, of the final controlling force of production.

Interest is another form of return on capital, although it is deducted from corporate income to secure the rate of profit. The inclusion of interest would raise the average rate of return on total capitalization (capital stock, surplus, bonds and mortgages) for the ten-year period 1925-34 to roughly 2.5% for all corporations and 3% for industrial corporations.

In no other ten-year period, including an equal number of prosperity and depression years, was the rate of return on capital as small as in 1925-34. The profit losses clearly reveal that capitalist production is becoming increasingly

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points out that the 9.2% rate of profit earned by Epstein's corporations in 1919-28 was "substantially lower" than the 13.6% rate earned by "a small but interesting" pre-war sample. The rate of profit will be treated fully in a forthcoming article.

unprofitable. In this sense the depression of the 1930's is an expression of capitalist decline, not of growth.

As long as the fall in the rate of profit was overcome by a rise in the mass of profits (primarily through the stimulus to accumulation provided by new industries and the export of capital) the fall in the rate was disturbing, but it was only a potential danger. Capitalists, moreover, are enriched more by a 5% yield on $2 of capital than by a 7.5% yield on $1 of capital. But already the fall in the rate of profit, expressed in capitalization rising more than profit, involved a *relative* fall in the mass of profits. When that relative fall becomes absolute, or tends to become absolute, capitalism is moving disastrously toward its objective economic limits, a condition of decline and permanent crisis. The disturbances created in capitalist enterprise assume catastrophic forms when the perpetual struggle against the tendency of the rate of profit to fall becomes a struggle against the tendency of the mass of profits to fall.

3. Newer Types of Depression and Prosperity

The cyclical movement of prosperity and depression assumes newer forms under the relations of declining capitalism. Three years ago I wrote:

"Recovery and prosperity *must* be on a lower level. . . . These conditions, imposing serious limitations upon the accumulation of capital, exclude the possibility of any real upsurge of prosperity. . . . The movement is animated by the tendency of the forces that sustain capitalist production to turn into their opposites and become its antagonists. There are recurrent cyclical crises and depressions, economic breakdowns which represent a *relative inability of production to develop further on a capitalist basis.* The breakdowns are overcome by accumulation on an enlarged scale. But the moment comes when that is no longer possible: the conditions of accumulation are increasingly limited. *The relative inability of production to develop further on a capitalist basis tends to become absolute.* . . . The decline and decay of capitalism do not exclude a revival of prosperity. For the cyclical movement goes on and contradictions are still 'solved' by the alternation of prosperity and depression. But on a lower level: prosperity is more incomplete than formerly, accompanied by limitation of production and disemployment, developing swiftly toward a new crisis, while depression is more prolonged and grinding. The tendency is toward a condition of chronic depression, interrupted by fitful revivals of prosperity."[8]

That analysis and prediction are now fully confirmed. After a "fitful revival of prosperity" a minor depression is now developing. The two years 1933-34 were a period of slow recovery, while the years 1935-37 (only the first eight months of 1937) were definitely in the prosperity phase of the cycle. But that prosperity was limited, it was on lower levels than in 1929 and accompanied

8 Lewis Corey, *The Decline of American Capitalism* (1934), pp. 460, 470, 478-79, 485.

by three to four times the amount of unemployment. Now, before it is complete, that prosperity is interrupted by recession. There was a minor cyclical breakdown in September-November 1937; in the three months the New York *Times* Index of Business Activity fell around twenty points or 18%, larger than any fall in the agonizingly difficult recovery years, while the output of steel fell 50%. It is apparent that the recession will last well into 1938. The costs of depression are being renewed.

It is agreed among the bourgeois economists and apologists that this recession is the "normal" cyclical reaction. According to the United States Bureau of Agricultural Economics: "The general upswing of a business cycle is usually characterized by a relatively short recession."[9] But that is only partly true. It is true that every revival of prosperity is interrupted by one or two recessions before the next major depression. *But in the past the new prosperity was always on higher levels than before the depression, the prosperity that is now breaking down is on lower levels.* To use the most recent illustrations: production and employment in 1923 were on higher levels than in 1920 when the recession of 1924 took place, and they were on higher levels in 1926 than in 1923 when the recession of 1927 took place. *But cyclical recession now takes place in the midst of an incomplete prosperity, with economic activity only around the 1929 levels and with three to four times as much unemployment* (6,000,000 to 8,000,000 unemployed). That is a development the bourgeois economists and apologists cannot dismiss, as it is unprecedented and ominous of the future of capitalism.

For if the usual cyclical recession after recovery takes place in the midst of a prosperity that has not gone beyond the pre-depression levels, it means that full prosperity cannot be restored by purely economic action, which means that American capitalism is declining. Another symptom of decline is the part that government spending played in the restoration of prosperity, the part that the virtual stoppage of government spending played in the coming of this recession, and the demand that government resume spending to "pep up" business again.

This recession will probably last another six or nine months. Business activity may then move upward again, possibly to higher levels than prevailed in the first eight months of 1937, but not much higher (unless there is American rearmament or another World War) with unemployment still around 5,000,000. For the inability of capitalism to fully utilize all its productive forces and capital is now greater than it was.

Under those conditions the costs of depression become more normal and largely persist in the prosperity phase of the business cycle. Capitalism is undermined by more downward pressure on the rate of profit and the mass of profits. It is the decline and decay of capitalism.

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9 New York *Times*, November 2, 1937.

The Railroad Strikes of 1885-86

BY HARRY FRUMERMAN

THE RAILROAD strikes of 1885-86 occupy a place of great importance in the annals of American labor. In magnitude they were second only to the railroad strikes of 1877; in the ferocity with which the struggle was waged to none. In them capitalism at its worst in the figure of the notorious Jay Gould was pitted against the forces of organized labor as represented by the Knights of Labor. Both sides realized the significance of the issues at stake and left no stone unturned to achieve victory. The strikes were of unique prominence in a period of general labor unrest.

I

During the 1880's the Knights of Labor began organizing the poorly paid and dissatisfied workers of Gould's enterprises. In the summer of 1883 they had been associated with the strike of the Western Union telegraph operators which was savagely crushed. They continued their efforts in the greater sphere of the Gould railroads in the southwest, concentrating on shopmen, trackmen and others not included in the Railroad Brotherhoods. A collision was certain for Gould, who was violently anti-labor and often boasted that he could "hire one-half of the working class to kill the other half," did not intend to allow the Knights of Labor to dominate the Southwestern system without a struggle.

The initial outbreak came in 1885. Although the Missouri Pacific Railroad, the backbone of the Southwestern system, was enjoying a period of comparative prosperity, the management decided that it could take advantage of the generally unsettled condition of business and slash the wages of the shopmen, who unlike the engineers, firemen and conductors, were poorly organized and could not offer strong resistance to such measures. A wage cut of 5 percent was added in February, 1885 to a 10 percent reduction which had been imposed on them the previous October.[1] A similar wage reduction was given to the shopmen of the Missouri, Kansas and Texas Railroad and the Wabash Railroad. The day

1 U. S. House of Representatives, 49th Cong., 2nd Sess., (1887) Report No. 4147. "Investigation of Labor Troubles in Missouri . . ." Part I, P. i. Report of the Committee. (Hereafter cited as *Strike Investigation*. Pages cited are from Part I unless otherwise indicated.)

after they received their wage cuts the Wabash shopmen went out on strike,[2] and were followed a few days latter by their fellow workers in the Missouri Pacific and the Missouri, Kansas and Texas. By the first week in March the strike had spread to all the important shops of the Southwestern system in Missouri and Texas.

The injustice of the Southwestern system's action was clearly brought out in a special report which the Commissioner of Labor Statistics made to Governor Marmaduke of Missouri in the middle of March:

"The grievances of the employes," he wrote, "were based upon repeated reductions of wages and shortening of time in the shops of the . . . Missouri Pacific Railroad and leased lines operated by it, bringing the wages of the employes below the wages paid by the other lines in this state, and in Kansas and Texas. The feeling of dissatisfaction was intensified by the publication of the financial statement of the Missouri Pacific Railway Company, at the last annual meeting of its director, showing large earnings for the road by neglecting to show the deficit in the earnings of its leased and other lines operated by it; and when on February 9th a notice was posted in the shops that another reduction would take place, dating from March 1st, the employes determined to quit."[3]

The strikers sent a statement of their grievances to H. M. Hoxie, then 3rd Vice-President of the Missouri Pacific, demanding the restoration of their old wage scale and complaining that they were allowed to work only five days a week and sometimes did not work more than three or four. Hoxie ignored the petition and on March 9, 1885 the strike became general on all points of the Southwestern railroad system, involving 10,000 miles of railroad and 4,500 workers.

Public sympathy was on the side of the strikers for the Gould management was cordially detested. The Knights of Labor saw this strike as a golden opportunity to strengthen their position in the Southwestern system and decided to intervene and lend active support to the strikers. The Knights of Labor of the Union Pacific appropriated $30,000 and sent an organizer, Joseph Buchanan, to assist them. Buchanan organized railroad men's assemblies wherever he went during his extensive travels over the striking lines.[4]

The powerful Railroad Brotherhoods rallied to the support of the striking shopmen and as a result all freight traffic was suspended on the Southwestern system. The strike was orderly in character and law abiding. "No specific acts of violence were resorted to, and there was no particular destruction of property . . . " reported the Congressional committee sent out to investigate the

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2 John R. Commons et al., *History of Labor in the United States,* vol. II, p. 368.

3 Quoted in *Strike Investigation,* p. ii.

4 John R. Commons et all., *op. cit.,* vol. II, p. 368.

strikes.[5] Railroad officials tried to move the accumulated traffic of about 1,500 freight cars, "but without success." When an engine was fired up, and attached to a train, the engineer was approached by strikers with the plea: "For the sake of your family and ours, don't take out that engine." The appeal was generally effective. A delegation of strikers was sent to confer with the governor at Jefferson City. On March 12th, at a meeting of strikers and citizens, it was proposed that the strike be settled by restoring all strikers at the wages paid them before the strike broke out; that after April 1, 1885, the wage scale be restored to its former level; that no reduction be made for a year; and that no employee be dismissed for participating in the strike.[6] Three days later the Missouri Pacific settled on these terms and on March 16th the strike was officially ended.

During the strike shopmen in large numbers had joined the Knights of Labor. The prestige of the Knights of Labor was greatly enhanced by the victory, in which they had played a conspicuous part, and thousands more from the Southwestern system flocked to their ranks.[7] In September, 1855, District Assembly 101 was formed, comprising all the Local Assemblies of the Southwestern system. At first there were five locals; by the time the strikes of 1886 broke out there were thirty locals and thousands of members. Existing lodges and unions of railroad workers were absorbed by the Knights, and this contributed greatly to the growth of their numbers.[8] A clash between the Knights of Labor and the Southwestern system was inevitable. Realizing that the Knights would soon whip into a compact fighting body the large number of unskilled workers who had joined the local assemblies on the Southwestern system, the management decided to strike at them by discharging as many leaders as they dared to.

The Wabash Railroad was first to strike out against the Knights. In the spring of 1885 the shopmen at Moberly, Missouri were reduced to the lowest possible number, and on June 16th the shops were closed altogether.[9] The lockout was a direct violation of the agreement by which the strike of the previous March had been settled and on August 18th, the Knights called a strike on the Wabash.[10] After a futile attempt to confer with the receivers of the Wabash, the General Executive Board of the Knights of Labor issued a general order to all assemblies on the Union Pacific and the Southwestern system directing their members to ". . . refuse to repair or handle in any manner Wabash rolling stock

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5 *Strike Investigation,* p. ii.

6 *Strike Investigation,* p. iii-iv. See p. 6-7 for text of the strike settlement.

7 *The Official History of the Great Strike of 1886 on the Southwestern Railroad System,* compiled by the Bureau of Labor Statistics and Inspection of Missouri. p. 7, (hereafter cited as: *Official History.*)

8 F. W. Taussig, "The Southwestern Strike of 1886" in *Quarterly Journal of Economics,* January, 1887, Vol. I, p. 187.

9 Norman J. Ware, *The Labor Movement in the United States,* 1860-1895, p. 140.

10 John R. Commons, *op. cit.,* vol. II, p. 368.

until further orders. . . ."[11] Had this order gone into effect, a strike equal in proportions to the great railroad strike of 1877 would have broken out. The Wabash was bankrupt and in receivership and could ill afford a strike. The Southwestern railroad system, with which the Wabash was allied, feared that it would be involved. Gould took a suggestion the Knights made and called a conference of the managers of the Missouri Pacific and Wabash Railroads and the General Executive Board of the Knights of Labor and threw his influence in favor of making concessions to the strikers. He assured the Knights that he wanted the workers to come directly to him in all labor disputes, that he believed in labor organization and the arbitration of all labor difficulties, and that he "would always endeavor to do what was right."[12] The Knights demanded the dismissal of those who had been hired by the Wabash repair shops since the beginning of the lockout; the reinstatement of all discharged men, the leaders of the strike being given priority; and the assurance that in the future no discrimination would be shown against members of the Knights of Labor by the railroads. Under pressure from Gould the Wabash receivers settled on substantially these terms.[13]

To the public the settlement meant that Jay Gould had been beaten. One of the most powerful of the railroad magnates had been forced to capitulate to the Knights of Labor against his will.

"Here a labor organization for the first time dealt on an equal footing with the most powerful capitalist in the country. It forced Jay Gould to recognize it as a power equal to himself, a fact which he amply conceded when he declared his readiness to arbitrate all labor difficulties that might arise. The oppressed laboring masses finally discovered a champion which could curb the power of a man stronger even than the government itself. All the pent-up feeling of bitterness and resentment which had accumulated during the two years of depression, in consequence of the repeated cuts in wages and the intensified domination by employers, now found vent in a rush to organize under the banner of the powerful Knights of Labor."[14]

The tremendous growth experienced by the Knights of Labor at this time was almost wholly due to their success in bringing Gould and the Wabash Railroad to terms. Their number swelled mightily. New locals sprang up with lightning rapidity. Between July, 1885 and October, 1886 membership in the Knights of Labor jumped from 110,000 to 730,000![15] So rapidly did the organ-

11 *John Swinton's Paper,* August 23, 1885, quoted by Commons, *op. cit.,* vol. II, p. 369.

12 John R. Commons, *op. cit.,* vol. II, p. 369.

13 *John Swinton's Paper,* August 30; September 13, 1885, quoted in John R. Commons, *op. cit.,* vol. II, p. 369.

14 *Ibid.,* vol. II, p. 370.

15 Carrol D. Wright, "An Historical Sketch of the Knights of Labor" in *Quarterly Journal of Economics,* January, 1887. vol. I, p. 156.

ization grow during this period that responsible leaders, fearing that it would get out of hand, took measures to curb this too-rapid growth. Charters to new locals had to be refused, and Terence V. Powderly, Grand Master Workman of the Knights of Labor, who always favored a conciliatory policy, took pains to deny the exaggerated accounts of the phenomenal growth of the Knights published by newspapers which were seeking to magnify the "menace" of organized labor.

II

In spite of the solemn promises made by the officials of the Southwestern system when the second strike in 1885 was settled, the Knights found that the terms of the settlement were constantly being violated. Railroads workers who had joined the Knights of Labor were being dismissed, and the companies were limiting the benefits of the strike settlement to shopmen whereas the Knights held it applied to yardmen, sectionmen and others. Other factors which led the leaders of the Knights of Labor to consider another strike were "the violations of the contract in not restoring the pay; the overtime work that was not paid for; the bridgemen who had been hauled about or traveling without being paid for it; the section men not receiving pay back—that is wages restored; and then, we considered that the wages were too small for them; that they could not live on them, as they frequently have only half time."[17]

The organizer and leading spirit of the strike of 1886 was Martin Irons, chairman of the executive board of District Assembly 101 of the Knights of Labor. Irons was much reviled by contemporary middle class opinion after the strike of 1886 had assumed serious proportions and violence broke out. The Congressional committee which investigated the strikes called him a "dangerous if not pernicious person," while James Ford Rhodes, voicing the feelings of the bourgeois, dismissed him with the epitaph "a vulgar labor agitator." Irons was headstrong, domineering, and perhaps more zealous than able, but he was wholeheartedly and sincerely devoted to the interests of his fellow workmen, without thought of personal aggrandizement. He had spent years wandering about the cities of the middle west and the south working as a machinist. In 1884 Irons joined the Knights of Labor and was instrumental in organizing District Assembly 101 the next year. Irons rose rapidly in the councils of District Assembly 101; by 1885 he was Master Workman of one of the local assemblies, Recording Secretary of the district assembly, and Chairman of the executive board, a position of great power. Convinced that the Southwestern system could be forced to obey the terms of the strike settlement only by having the Knights of Labor recognized, Irons embarked on a course of action by which this would

16 *Strike Investigation,* Part II, p. 438. Testimony of Martin Irons.

17 *Ibid.,* Part II, p. 444. Testimony of Martin Irons.

be accomplished, fully recognizing that another strike might be necessary.[18]

In January, 1886 District Council 101 was holding a convention in St. Louis. The Executive Committee presented a resolution embodying demands for recognition of the Knights of Labor by the Southwestern system and a minimum wage of $1.50 a day for unskilled labor. It was upheld almost unanimously, and the Executive Committee felt itself empowered to call a strike at its discretion to force the acceptance of the demands for recognition and a minimum wage.[19] Only an opportune moment was necessary.

Trouble broke out first on the Texas and Pacific Railroad. This road had gone bankrupt and was taken over by receivers in January, 1886. Claiming that the receivership absolved it of all responsibility to observe the terms of the strike settlement, it repeatedly violated it. The Knights believed that the road had been put in receivership to get rid of the strike settlement and to obtain the support of the federal courts. They still regarded the Texas and Pacific as part of the Southwestern system and were ready to fight the whole system because of these violations. On February 18, 1886 Charles A. Hall, Master Workman of District Assembly 101 and a foreman in the Texas and Pacific shops at Marshall, Texas, was dismissed for being absent from work without permission. Martin Irons intervened and attempted to have Hall reinstated by appealing to the receivers, but with no success. He concluded that the time for a showdown had come. "Without any further warning on Monday, March 1, 1886 at 3 o'clock the whistles at Marshall and Big Spring Rock sounded, and the employes in and surrounding the shops at these points walked out to a man, and the . . . strike . . . was inaugurated."[20] By prearranged agreement the shopmen at Fort Worth and Dallas walked out at the same time, and the strike became general along the whole Texas and Pacific line.

In contrast to the strike of the previous year, violence broke out almost immediately. Coal heavers, miners, and telegraph operators joined the striking shopmen. Messages were delayed in transmission from 24 to 36 hours, and in some cases destroyed. On March 5th all freight shipments came to a standstill and all traffic was discontinued west of Colorado. After unsuccessful attempts to end the strike, it spread by March 8th to the entire Southwestern system. Nine thousand shopmen, switchmen, trackmen and other employes were on strike; many were "laid off" because there was no work for them to do. All, freight traffic was ended. A strike of the employes of the St. Louis Bridge Company, an independent railroad running from East St. Louis, Ill. over the bridge and through a tunnel to St. Louis, paralyzed transportation between St. Louis

18 *Strike Investigation,* p. xi.

19 *Strike Investigation,* pp. xi, xii.

20 *Ibid.,* p. xii; Part II, p. 354. Testimony of Charles A. Hall. See F. W. Taussig, *op. cit.,* pp. 190-191.

and the East. Almost all the terminal facilities in St. Louis were in the hands of the St. Louis Bridge Company; the twelve railroads which converged in East St. Louis had to use it in forwarding their traffic to St. Louis.[21]

On March 10th the Missouri Pacific Railroad began advertising for strike-breakers. Meanwhile the strikers were attempting to force the engineers, firemen, brakemen and conductors to join them. Threats, intimidation and violence were used and were effective in forcing them to abstain from working and in some cases to give aid against their will.

As in 1885, public sympathy was on the side of the strikers in the beginning. Jay Gould was extremely unpopular in the Southwest and many were glad to see his Southwestern system in difficulty. Newspapers of St. Louis, Kansas City and other points in the southwest supported the strikers, while the great journals in New York were also sympathetic. However, as the strike spread, became more intense and took a violent turn, there was an immediate and decided change in public opinion. Hatred of Gould was overwhelmed by hatred of the revolting workers and fear of the consequences of their victory. As the business interests of the Southwest began to feel the effect of the traffic blockade, all the forces of wealth and power were aligned against the strikers. Great pressure was exerted on the state governments to intervene against them. Newspapers and periodicals unleashed savage attacks against the Knights, painting their acts in lurid colors and predicting dire consequences should the strikers win. The pages of the liberal *Nation* were full of bitter denunciations of the "anarchical" strikers, and E. L. Godkin revealed the narrow range of his sympathies and his lack of understanding of the problems of labor in his blasts against the Knights. By the time the strike had gotten under way, the Knights and the strikers were completely isolated by public opinion and faced by a solid opposition of all classes.

Violence and lawlessness increased as the strike progressed. Those who refused to go on strike were intimidated and threatened. Locomotives were "killed" by the removal of some vital part, trains were sidetracked, cars were uncoupled, water tanks were opened, machine shops and roundhouses were broken into and wrecked, bridges and trestles were burned, and tracks were torn up. An army of deputy marshals, police, detectives, sheriffs and constables was recruited by the railroads to preserve order and protect property, but their efforts were in vain. The national leaders of the Knights of Labor deprecated violence and lawlessness, but the rank and file took to it in increasing numbers. Passenger trains were generally unmolested, but suburban trains were stopped. The Wabash, being in the hands of receivers and having the protection of the federal courts, was unmolested, though the Texas and Pacific, also in receiver's hands was made to bear the full brunt of the strike.

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21 *Official History,* p. 21. F. W. Taussig, *op. cit.,* pp. 194-195.

The strike in its initial stages was directed by Martin Irons. Seeing that no progress had been made by the middle of March, Terence V. Powderly, Grand Master Workman of the Knights of Labor, decided to intervene. Powderly differed from Irons in almost every respect. With the advent of Powderly, the strategy and tactics of the strike underwent a great change. He disapproved of Irons' methods, was opposed to strikes and favored arbitration. Powderly immediately took steps to settle the strike by arbitration. On March 18th he asked H. M. Hoxie, managing Vice-President of the Missouri Pacific, who had assumed charge of the management of the Southwestern system during the strike, for a conference. Hoxie, according to a contemporary observer, was "an able, straightforward and humane man, imbued with a strict sense of duty and discipline but disposed to just treatment of his subordinates."[22] But his sympathies were entirely with the capitalist class and he had a deep hatred of the Knights of Labor and all strikers. As stubborn and determined as Martin Irons, he was steadfast in his resolve to stamp out the strike and root the Knights of Labor out of the Southwestern system. Consequently he turned down Powderly's request, though he did agree to meet him as a private citizen. Powderly refused to confer with Hoxie in any other capacity than Grand Master Workman of the Knights of Labor and negotiations to end the strike by arbitration were broken off.[23]

Meanwhile St. Louis was beginning to feel the full effects of the strike and the traffic blockade. Factories were closing because of their inability to obtain supplies, especially fuel, and ship goods. Unemployment became widespread and the price of coal and provisions soared. Business was coming to a standstill and discontent was rife. On March 24th at a joint meeting of the directors of the Merchants' Exchange and the Merchants' Transportation Committee of St. Louis the strike was unanimously condemned, as harming all classes. The same day a monster mass meeting of manufacturers and merchants was held at the Mercantile Club in St. Louis. Resolutions were passed declaring the strike not merely a question between employer and employes, but a national issue in which four states were vitally interested. If the strike continued, they stated, it would ruin the commercial, industrial and laboring interests of St. Louis and the Southwest. The Knights of Labor were denounced for interfering with the rights of property and of individuals and demands were made that freight traffic be restored with the protection of state and municipal authorities. "The blockade on the commerce of the city shall and must be raised—peaceably if possible, forcibly if necessary. The trains must run."[24] This was their ultimatum to the strikers.

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22 F. W. Taussig, *op. cit.*, p. 217.

23 *Strike Investigation,* p. xix.

24 *Strike Investigation,* pp. xviii-xix; *Official History,* pp. 54-56.

The governors of the states affected by the strike acted quickly. Proclamations were issued in Missouri, Kansas, Texas and Arkansas calling for the end of the strike. On March 24th Governor John S. Marmaduke of Missouri condemned the strike for holding up traffic and called on the Missouri Pacific to resume operations, pledging the entire power of the state to their aid, and warning the strikers to refrain from interfering.[2]

The tide of public opinion had turned against the strikers. Hitherto Hoxie had not dared to run trains out of St. Louis because of the inability to obtain police protection from the municipal authorities of St. Louis or the state authorities of Missouri. His policy "was one of masterful inactivity." Unwilling to take the risk of having trains wrecked and men injured or killed, Hoxie had suspended all train movements out of St. Louis. Now that police protection became available, railroad traffic was gradually resumed in Missouri, Kansas and Texas.[26]

Again Powderly projected himself into the strike, this time appealing to Gould himself in an effort to secure a favorable settlement before it was too late, for the resumption of train movements portended the end of the strike. On March 27th Frederick Turner, Secretary of the Knights of Labor, wrote to Gould asking for a conference between representatives of the Knights and the railroads to settle the strike.[27] Gould called on the Knights to order the strikers back to work and to end violence and the interference with train movements. He did meet with Powderly on the 28th, however, and apparently a basis for arbitration was reached. In a letter to Powderly he quoted a telegram he had sent to Hoxie ordering him not to discriminate against Knights in hiring men then stating: "We see no objection to arbitrating the differences between the employes and the company, past or future."

Jubilant at having ended the strike at a stroke, Powderly wired Irons the day that Gould had consented to arbitration and ordered the strikers back to work. Powderly announced to the press that Gould would arbitrate with the strikers and that the strike was over. In all quarters satisfaction was expressed with the manner in which the strike, which had been growing more serious every day, had been ended.

Suddenly Gould announced that next day that he had never consented to arbitration![29] He declared that Hoxie had entire control of the strike and that he had merely said that he saw no objection himself to arbitration. Gould must have known that Hoxie was not in favor of arbitration when he gave his

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25 *Official History,* pp. 57-59; *Strike Investigation,* p. xix.

26 *Strike Investigation,* p. xix; *Official History,* p. 64.

27 Pamphlet, *Correspondence Between Jay Gould, Terence V, Powderly, et al.* (n.d., n.p.) pp. 1-4.

28 *Strike Investigation,* pp. xx, 37.

29 *New York Times,* March 29, 1886.

assurances to Powderly. The whole incident appears to have been a trick to break down the morale of the strikers. Astounded as he was by Gould's perfidy, Powderly was willing to continue negotiations with Gould for a peaceful settlement of the strike. At a conference between Gould and Powderly it was established that Hoxie, pursuant to Gould's instructions, had taken charge of arbitration, but refused to meet a committe of strikers. Hoxie declared that he would only deal with a committee of employes who were actually at work! In other words, the strike would have to be called off before the grievances of the strikers were heard. Anxious to have the strike settled as quickly as possible, for he saw that the strikers were losing ground daily, Powderly ordered Irons to yield to Hoxie's terms.[30]

Had Irons obeyed, the strike would have ended at this point, and the Knights of Labor would have suffered a crushing and humiliating defeat, for these were the terms of abject surrender. Irons, however, was determined to see the strike through to its conclusion whatever it might be. He disregarded Powderly's telegram, therefore, and prepared for a last-ditch battle. His stubborn refusal to make any concessions forced Powderly to consent to a continuation of the strike. "This will be a fight to the death," remarked an official of the Knights.

Thus the strike dragged on into April. Traffic was resumed gradually, but violence continued. In Illinois the governor ordered the National Guard to hold itself in readiness for immediate strike duty and made an investigation of the advisability of immediate military intervention in East St. Louis, where conditions were particularly acute. On April 9th a battle between strikers and police, militia and deputy sheriffs in East St. Louis resulted in the death of seven persons and the destruction of $75,000 worth of railroad property through fire. Only after 700 National Guardsmen were sent to the scene was order restored.[33] In the farming communities of the interior the shortages of coal and of goods were even more serious. In many places "Law and Order Leagues" were formed against the Knights of Labor.[34] The strike waned perceptibly. After the bloody riot of April 9th there was no more serious violence. The strike dragged on through April "without incident of any graver character than the occasional killing of an engine, derailment of a train, the moving of troops, the continued issuance of orders, and the passage of resolutions and correspondence of all sorts."[35]

On April 12th the House of Representatives ordered an investigation of the

30 *Strike Investigation,* p. 66.
31 *Official History,* pp. 87-88.
32 *New York Times,* April 6, 1886.
33 *Official History,* pp. 101, 104; *Strike Investigation,* pp. xxii-iii.
34 *The Nation,* April 15, 1886.
35 *Strike Investigation,* p. xxi.

strike and three days later a committee of seven left for a tour of the strike area. Long hearings were held and most of the principals in the strike testified. Irons stated that the strike had been called, not in the interest of one man, but for a principle; that the contract between the employes and the railroad, made through the mediation of the governors of Missouri and Kansas in 1885, had been violated. The press gave garbled and misleading summaries of his testimony. When asked what had been gained by the strike, Irons replied: "I think it is right smart . . . I think it has opened up the eyes of the public to the tyranny of the railroad corporations, both to their employes and to the citizens at large. It has opened up the eyes of Congress to see the necessity of sending you out as a committee to look into the matter."[36] The press featured the first sentence of his remarks, "I think it was right smart," and tucked the rest of his testimony, if it was reported at all, in an obscure corner. Taken by itself, this sentence had an air of insolence and bravado, and gave an utterly false impression of Irons' statement. The committee collected voluminous testimony abounding with instances of violence; wrote a report finding many of the strikers' grievances justified and both sides at fault; but made no definite recommendations. On April 22nd President Cleveland sent a special message to Congress suggesting a scheme of voluntary arbitration for the settlement of similar disputes. Nothing that the government did, however, contributed in the least to the settlement of the strike.

The last days of the strike were enlivened by virulent denunciations of Gould and Hoxie and a lively correspondence between Powderly and Gould full of accusations and counter-accusations. Powderly uttered many brave words, but the strike was irredeemably lost. The Southwestern system was in full operation, and conditions were almost normal. The remaining few strikers were a forlorn band. Their ranks had been decimated by desertions and those who were still loyal to the strike faced a dark future. Only the official announcement of the General Executive Board of the Knights of Labor was lacking for the formal conclusion of the strike. On May 4th this was issued and the strike was ended.

Few, if any, strikers were rehired, and these only for special reasons. The Missouri Pacific reduced its employes from 13,393 to 10,737. No member of the Knights of Labor was rehired, nor anyone who had committed violence during the strike.[37] "Martin Irons has done us more harm than a thousand Jay Goulds could," an embittered ex-striker declared.[38] Irons himself was ruined. He was blacklisted on the railroads and his source of livelihood was gone. Misfortune hounded his footsteps. His wife died during the strike and his furniture was

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36 *Strike Investigation,* pp. xx, and (Part II), 460.

37 *New York Times,* April 30, 1886. (Interview with Jay Gould.)

38 *Railway Age,* August 12, 1886.

seized for debt. He attempted to lecture but failed, and during his last years he was reduced to keeping a lunch counter in a small basement saloon in Kansas City and later in the old French Market in St. Louis. He died in 1900, a broken and forgotten man.[39] Hoxie did not long survive his victory; he died at the end of 1886. "He has fallen a martyr to high duty and his name and example will be long cherished by his countrymen as those of a true hero," piously declared the *Nation*.[40] Gould rose in the estimation of his class, but his great unpopularity among the workers now became a bitter and unrelenting hatred. The strike emphasized the need for governmental regulation of the railroads, which began the following year when the Interstate Commerce Commission was established.

The disastrous ending of the strike hit the Knights particularly hard. "It was a complete capitulation and the severest blow the Order had suffered. . . . From that day the Knights of Labor lost ground."[41] Coming at the time of the unsuccessful May Day strikes for the 8-hour day it speeded the crumbling of the power of the Knights. By August, 1886 the Knights of Labor as an organization had practically disappeared from the Southwestern system and was rapidly dying out on all western railroads. It lingered on elsewhere for several years, but only as a shadow of its former self. The passing of the Knights meant the rise to dominance of the American Federation of Labor, transforming American unionism.

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39 J. F. Rhodes, *op. cit.*, vol. VIII, p. 276. See Appleton's *Annual Cyclopedia* for 1900 and the New York *Herald*, March 25, 1888.

40 *The Nation*, December 2, 1886.

41 Norman J. Ware, *op. cit.*, p. 148.

A Metaphysics for the Movies

BY MEYER SCHAPIRO

In Professor Adler's book on *Art* and *Prudence*[1]—the conflict between the value of the movies as an art and their possible dangers to morality—the movies have at last found a metaphysical justification of their vices and virtues, and even of their existence. The owners of the moving-picture industry, having been disturbed by the charges of various moral agencies and investigators that the movies are bad for the morals of the audience, entrusted Adler with the task of criticizing these opinions. His report to the industry and his views on the relations of the film and morality fill a considerable part of the volume. With great care he demonstrates that most of the charges are based on opinion and not on knowledge, that several of the investigations which have supported these charges are scientifically defective, and that we lack reliable knowledge of the influence of the movies, so that a sound practical conclusion is impossible. He admits finally that the problem is almost insoluble, except by "a perfected Christian wisdom"; the best one can do is to keep the children away from bad movies; censorship or extirpation is impossible.

The interest of the book hardly lies in this conclusion. Certainly the latter does not require the immense arsenal of argument and the seven hundred pages of analytical bombardament which Adler brings to his attack on the question. But it is apparent that the morals of the movies are only the occasion for expounding and applying principles nearer to his heart than this limited subject matter. The core of the discussion is not so much the movies as the author's ideas on philosophy, morals, society, science, religion, metaphysics, tradition, esthetics and education, in fact on everything but contraception and war. If its length seems disproportionate to the results—the latter could be deduced more simply and directly and from assumptions less extensive than his own—on the other hand, the presuppositions which are the real interest of the book are insufficiently developed in proportion to the author's claims. The first principles are not systematically stated, nor are the difficulties of his position met. And in the same way, the social aspects of the movies relevant to the artistic and moral questions are completely neglected. Hollywood is absent or is masked by transposi-

1 Mortimer J. Adler, *Art and Prudence* (*New York* 1937, 686 pages, $5.).

tions into general categories, and the material grounds of moral conflict evaded. And although the author speaks constantly of a superior Christian wisdom and morality in the light of which alone the conflicts of art and morals, not to mention the greater social struggles, can be resolved, these eternal criteria of man's ultimate good are not applied to the movies. His analysis of the esthetics of the film, patterned on Aristotle, contains hardly a single independent reference to the structure of an actual film. Hence the book has a misshapen magnitude; it abounds in everything but what the critical reader looks for in the contexts introduced by the author.

What unites the opinions in this work is not so much their consistency as the programmatic assertion of a Catholic or perennial philosophy. It is part of the tendency toward the reinstatement of metaphysics as a superior knowledge which already has adherents in the universities; one of the most aggressive movements in educational theory proceeds from assumptions like his own. The criticism of the schools by President Hutchins[2] of the University of Chicago calls finally for a return to metaphysical first principles not merely as a matter for disinterested contemplation, but as the necessary basis for the solution of contemporary social and economic problems. Now Adler's book, which deals with a "practical" question, therefore provides at least one test of these theoretical claims, a test all the more significant since few Catholic writers are so insistent on the need for logical rigor. The convergence of his principles on the problem of the movies is especially piquant; for the movies, the most modern of the arts, become the entering wedge of his traditional metaphysics. The newest art is examined in order to confirm the oldest wisdom, and the movies are shown to conform to Aristotle's analysis of art. But behind this intellectual *tour de force* lie the more serious purposes of Hollywood and the Catholic church: the first is defended against its secular critics and the second is presented to Hollywood as its proper ally and the real bulwark of morality.

I. The First Principles

Adler contrasts the uncertainties and shabbiness of our everyday empirical knowledge and even the results of scientific investigation—"which of course (sic) adds nothing in the way of ideas"—with the self-evident truth and "completeness" of first principles and the propositions deduced from them. Hence he distinguishes two levels of knowledge, the knowledge of first principles or self-evident truths, and the knowledge of things tainted by contingency, which can at best be opinion and not true knowledge. Within this lower level, however, he sets apart the data of the natural sciences, which constitute probable knowledge, though not certainties, from the data of the sciences of man—

2 Reviewed by Abraham Edel, *Marxist Quarterly*, 1937, pp. 324-27.

psychology, history, etc.—which are merely an unscientific and prejudiced report of particulars and are usually unreliable.

What are these certain and "complete" principles and what are the grounds for his belief that they are self-evident? Neither the principles nor the grounds are submitted connectedly for the reader's examination, but some of the principles can be picked up in the course of the argument. They are so vaguely stated and applied that when Adler attributes self-evidence to a proposition it is unclear whether he means it literally or is using the rhetoric of the pulpit. The principles are simply assertions of constancy, that human nature is always essentially the same, that "common experience is always and everywhere the same, as man and the world are," that "moral principles are everywhere basically the same," that "the nature of art can be stated with finality," etc., etc. It is this constancy which is the subject-matter and basis of philosophy as distinguished from the inferior field of science. "Philosophy rests upon common experience, arising therefrom by reflection. . . . The metaphysician and the mathematician do not need any more experience than that which is possessed by the least experienced of men." The practical importance of metaphysics lies in just this independence of special experience and history. Dealing with unchangeable essences and possessing an eternal truth "which is therefore traditional and conservative," Adler can easily deduce from the self-evident principles a necessary hierarchy of mankind and the virtue of submission to the existing order. Obviously, if society is in its essence always the same, the good man conforms and non-conformity to custom, according to Adler, is contrary to nature; it is morally vicious, anti-social and a sin (pp. 163-65).

As a philosopher who begins by distinguishing true knowledge from opinion or merely probable knowledge according to the element of contingency present in the objects of the latter, it is surprising that Adler can still attribute certainty and necessity to statements about nature, man, society and experience. If these are subject to contingency, as he says again and again, then no synthetic statement about them can be more than probable. But by the very admission of their contingency it also becomes ambiguous to say that these things are always the same. What is it in them that is always the same? and what is it that changes? and how can we know in a given practical context whether what is in question is the invariant or changing? The meaning of terms like "basic," "essential" and "same" are nowhere explicated in spite of the constant iteration of the author's demand for rigor in those he criticizes.

But apart from this vagueness and ambiguity, the principles are suspicious because of the contradictions that appear in their application. The principles are said to rest on experience, but their truth is also said to be independent of questions of fact, as if they were tautologies or analytic statements.[3] They cannot

3 His remarks on obscenity are a case in point. He argues (1) that the "intrinsic evil of

depend on questions of fact since appeal to fact, by his own word, can only yield probabilities, not certainties, whereas the principles are necessary and self-evident. Yet the universality of the principles is made to depend finally on experience, and it is even presented as a certainty that experience is always basically the same, although this can never be verified and this non-verifiability is no less probable than the assertion that experience is always the same.

II. Human Nature and Morality

Now consider, for example, Adler's principles of human nature. Although he asserts that human nature is always basically the same, he tells us that human behavior is unpredictable. It is unpredictable not only because subject to accidents, but because the will is free—man being a rational creature endowed with something of God's essence. If two men are completely alike, and are in identical circumstances, according to Adler they will clearly behave differently since each has a free will. Thus reason becomes an element of contingency in human behavior and, moreover, with the will (contrary to Thomist teaching), a principle of individuation. The will being free and *uncaused,* like God, we cannot know the effects of various things on behavior. And since the power of choice is unconditioned yet variable, choice itself becomes meaningless or unintelligible. Human nature, however, is described as different by Professor Adler when affected by divine grace than when unaffected, when guided by Catholic principles than when unbaptized. Man is unpredictable, not because he is irrational, but because he is rational. A scientific empirical psychology he holds to be impossible, but man can discover by his reason self-evident first truths about his soul. But of such necessary truths Adler gives no convincing examples; his psychological statements are either meaningless views like the "basic principle of the separation of reason and the body" or common-sense observations.

Whatever his views on the caused and unpredictable nature of human behavior, Adler cannot touch on any subject without committing himself to predictions about man and the consequences of such and such influences on his behavior. In posing the problem of the effect of the movies on human feeling and action, whether esthetic or moral, he assumes that man is affected in his behavior by given causes; even his rules of art are rooted in observations, interpreted as cause and effect. If in one place he asserts in defense of Hollywood that we have no scientific knowledge of the effects of the arts or spectacles on

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obscenity is not a question of fact but a moral principle," irrespective of how our idea of what is obscene may change and "regardless of its effects"; (2) that sexual taboos are universal and (3) that obscenity is wrong because it arouses sensuality and sensuality is "morally condemned." In accord with these principles the naked Eve in the churches of the Middle Ages is regarded as moral, but the naked Venus of the Renaissance as obscene.

behavior, elsewhere he accepts as a matter of fact the charges of the Christian fathers that the Roman spectacles were ruinous to morality and attributes changes in taste to particular social and psychological causes. And although he insists rightly on man's distinctive capacity to modify himself as well as his surroundings he denies this to the artist: the arts are "only a mirror of already existing manners and morals." Certainly the virtue of prudence, the taking of counsel with regard to action, would be impossible unless the effects and causes of behavior were knowable. And Adler himself, in denouncing the social scientists who adopt a social relativism with regard to moral standards, predicts that if their teaching is not extirpated civilization will perish; and in spite of his disavowal of prediction in social affairs he is sure that only Christianity will save man and solve his earthly problems.

Nothing in this book, it seems to me , is more contradictory, yet more dogmatic, than Adler's ideas about morality. On the one hand, he tells us that failure to conform to local customs is anti-social and morally vicious, since these customs are the momentary determinations of the basic and eternal principles of morality. By the same token, on the other hand, he considers it morally pernicious to present virtue as always rewarded and vice as always punished (perfect justice is reserved for the Last Judgment); yet the movies, which by his own admission exhibit this pernicious view of vice and virtue, he will not permit to be called immoral since they conform in their morality to the customs and views of the modern Christian community. Moreover, the movies are made for a hierarchy of people with different needs and capacities, and for some of them it is congenial to see vice always punished and virtue always rewarded. He admits ignorance of how arts affect behavior, but he asserts that by getting the art they need people are kept from crime and the community is preserved. And finally, it is wrong to criticize the arts for their effects on morals and manners, since the arts are "only a mirror reflecting the already existing manners and morals of their time." Verily, "our" Adler is both a menace to morality and its greatest defender. It becomes doubtful, after reading him, that immorality is possible or that there is a Christian morality distinct from others. The pagan arts, he says, were offensive to Christians as "transgressions of Christian values and manners. But Christian manners [and why not values?] are no less conventional than other manners. They have changed from time to time, although always remaining expressions of Christian morality, since as conventions they are determinations of the principles of that morality. What Christians find offensive has, therefore, changed in the course of centuries." But since the "basic principles of morality are everywhere the same," it is evident that the moral difference between Christianity and paganism is merely conventional, at any rate not basic. The church fathers asserted again and again that they did not differ from the pagans in their manners, but unlike Adler they also insisted

on the moral difference and sometimes defended the moral right to disobey what they considered unjust laws.

III. The Rules of Art

All of Adler's general principles with regard to the arts are also compromised by ambiguous statements. The rules of the arts cannot be violated, he says, except by genius. But these principles are simply a description of the arts as practised. Are the rules based then on the works of non-genius? And if mediocre works adhere to them without success and genius violates them with impunity, what sense do they have as rules of art? What determines the selection of relevant examples from which the rules are to be deduced? But in spite of his admission that the rules are descriptions of the arts as practised and that these arts are subject to historical change, Adler employs the rules academically, as if they were absolute principles, to set limits to the arts and to judge particular works. Art becomes a metaphysical entity of which "the nature can be stated with finality." Only from such a view could he write that everything to be said about the movies was said before the movies existed; nevertheless he is compelled to add later, in describing present practice, that new inventions will change the character of the movies and the full nature of the movies is still problematic. Armed with his first principles and the fullness of his prehistoric knowledge of the movies, it is natural that he should find the modern empirical literature on the movies "vaguely discursive" and that his own account of the esthetics of the film should be so poor in concrete illustration. But at the same time he draws heavily on these vaguely discursive writers and has to acknowledge their "clear formulations" and "insights."

IV. The True Nature of Democracy

In the field of society this pretension to first principles and to a profounder knowledge than is given to mere empiricists, leads to the greatest absurdities. Adler *e.g.* attempts to describe the nature of democracy in its "deepest sense," and discovers that it lies in modern technology which imposes on all governments to-day the same submission to the will of the people. In this "deepest sense" the governments of Italy, Germany, Russia, the United States and England are all democratic.[4] But having identified democracy with the use

4 Concurrent with this profundity, and a symptom of his final solidarity with the lowest levels of the social sciences that he takes such pains to denounce as unscientific, is Professor Adler's opinion that "what the communists call wage-slavery is consistent with democracy in so far as it depends upon an equality of economic opportunity which is proportional to the abilities of different men." The Catholic Church is against capitalism "in so far" as it exploits the worker, and against socialism "in so far" as it excludes the capitalist.

of radios and machines—the United States being no less democratic than Italy since here, too, the trains run on time—he tells us that Elizabethan England was also democratic, in spite of the monarchical form of government, because of the democratic spirit of the citizens. And in discussing the democratic as distinguished from the classic and Christian views of the problem of art and prudence he cites the writings of Milton, Rousseau and Tolstoy, all belonging to pre-modern technology, as examples of democratic opinion. Further, while he speaks of the individualism of Milton, his refusal to let the state regulate his own moral welfare, as "a peculiarly modern note and one of the expressions of the democratic temper," he includes fascism as democratic, although he admits elsewhere that it regulates every detail of individual life. His conception of democracy is contrary to his own principles since he defines an order of government by an order of technology, an effect by one of its possible, but not sufficient causes. More essential to democracy is the concept of individual rights; it is by the limitations and extensions of these rights that we judge a government to be more or less democratic and not by the character of its vehicles and traffic. The very classification of views on art as Greek, Christian and Democratic indicates the arbitrariness of Professor Adler's thought; for these three categories—a cultural, a religious and a political—are hardly comparable and conceal the feudal aspect of the Christian stage. The analysis terminates in the view that since democracy, *i.e.* fascism, communist dictatorship and liberal representative government, is the modern political form, the Catholic church accepts it as the *status quo* and considers its conditions in solving the problem of art and prudence.

V. The Christian Tradition

But in doing so, the church maintains its perennial philosophy inherited from Aristotle and Plato. This tradition is described as unified, unchanging and non-progressive, advancing only by a sharpening of analysis, by a dialectic growth toward higher syntheses, never through new experience. Inspired also by divine truth, which is transmitted through the canonical books of the Bible, Catholicism is declared to be the only doctrine that can solve the issues of our time. There can "obviously" be no conflict between Catholicism and science, for the latter as a product of reason, issuing finally from God, can hardly be inconsistent with the divine revelation. But Adler has still another guarantee of this harmony of truths in the imposing choice he offers the reader: either you accept Catholicism, in which case there is for you no conflict with science, or you do not accept it, in which case, by "a higher dialectical principle," you must take its doctrines on their face value as revelations of divine truth (p. 55). Before these clear alternatives who can dare to doubt the Virgin Birth or the Resurrection of the Dead!

Throughout this argument Adler arbitrarily assumes a unity of Christian doctrine for which there exists no historical evidence. By an elegant but obvious selection of texts he tries to present a Catholic view on art and prudence as a dialectical synthesis of Plato and Aristotle; the moralism of the first and the catharsis of the second, sophistically regarded as opposites, are fused in a higher Christian theory which synthesises both aspects. But he has to admit that Aristotle already sees both aspects of the problem and that Christianity in general inclines to the Platonic moralism rather than to a synthesis. What then is the unique Christian synthesis? It lies, Adler tells us, in the problem of Church and State, in Thomas Aquinas' view that the State ought to extirpate immoral arts. How does this differ from the classic view? He is willingly obscure on this relation of Church and State; certainly, in his own consideration of art and prudence, which he declares to be guided by Christian principles, the state is left out altogether. Yet in this omission he runs counter to the highest spokesman of the church, the present pope, who vigorously recommends the intervention of the seculuar arm. Hence the trim dialectical synthesis in Catholic wisdom turns out to be irrelevant to Adler's learned conclusions which in turn contradict the last encyclical of the pope.

It should be observed at this point that although Adler attacks with unbridled vehemence, and in the aroused manner of one who is defending the most sacred values, those writers who speak of the bad effects of the movies without having supported their opinions by the most rigorous method, and opposes to their laxity the superior wisdom of the perennial Christian-Aristotelean tradition, yet he passes over in complete silence the equally loose statement of the pope on the same matter, a statement which he undoubtedly knows since other parts of the encyclical are quoted in the book: "Now then it is a certainty that can readily be verified that the more marvellous the progress of the modern motion picture art and industry, the more pernicious and deadly has it shown itself to morality, to religion and even to the very decencies of human society." For their prejudiced and unscientific opinions Adler denounces the academic investigators as a menace to society; but there is hardly an error he reproaches in them which cannot be found in the Latin emanation from the Holy Father. "Every one knows what damage is done to the soul by bad motion pictures. They are occasions of sin . . . they show life under a false light; they cloud ideals. . . ." The appeal to morals in the papal encyclical is not criticized in the same language as the corresponding appeal in non-Catholic writers; it is simply characterized as a bit of papal Platonism and therefore within the great perennial tradition. And in rejecting "science" as of any use in the problem Adler can say without irony: "the appeal to science is notably absent from the writings of Pope Pius XI on the problem of the motion pictures."

To establish the unity of Aristotle, Thomas and Christian tradition as a

whole, Adler must resort to a doubtful manipulation of texts. Plato and Paul are equated as rationalists, and Aristotle's assertion of the animal nature of man is regarded as an anticipation of the Christian doctrine of original sin, as if Aristotle understood man's animality to be a corruption of a higher human nature and as if this animal nature (contrary to Thomas) was implanted in man after the Fall. With a similar license Aristotle, who used the term catharsis metaphorically to designate the homoeopathic relief of overcharged feelings through tragic drama and certain kinds of exciting music (and in his *Politics* explicitly distinguished these arts from others), is interpreted by Adler to mean that all arts, in fact all recreation and amusements, have a cathartic function and that catharsis is identical with what Freud describes as sublimation. Even sports and parades are included, and Adler is compelled by his theory to consider these as forms of imitation, like tragedy, as if card-games and fishing were representations of action and as if the architecture of church buildings were designed for the amusement of the faithful. Having elastically deformed the sense of Aristotle in this way, he stretches the rare and unexplicit remarks of Thomas on the value of play and relaxation after labor to mean the purgation of the passions through contemplation of spectacles of human action.

It is by such laxities of scholarship and by such misinterpretations that Adler tries to establish his perennial philosophy and give to his views of the film the dignity of a continuous tradition accepted by the greatest minds, yet accepted because of its self-evident first principles. True, he tells us that his task is not the philologist's of determining the precise meaning of texts, that he makes the interpretations which these texts permit, but it is not evident on what grounds he believes that the texts permit them or that his selection of texts is appropriate. Reading him, an innocent person must assume that Adler as a Catholic is representing *the* perennial Catholic position, that if he admits some differences within the church on these matters, nevertheless they are resolved in the official view. But how does he do this? By having Thomas answer Bossuet, although he is compelled to say in a note that Bossuet can in fact cite a lengthy opinion of Thomas favorable to his own position. But Adler is led to downright misstatements of history since he limits himself to a few writers and neglects Christian practice as distinct from Christian philosophers. Thus he maintains that the church has never thought to regulate the recreations of the people, when it is notorious that for centuries its councils and penitentials have pronounced against dancing and popular singing, even in religious festivals.[5] The tradition of censorship in the West has been Catholic, whatever Adler may say to throw the burden of fault on Protestants, Platonists and social scientists.

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5 See Dom. Gougaud, *Revue d'Histoire Ecclésiastique,* 1914.

VI. Art and Prudence

In spite of this Christian harmony of art and prudence in the Middle Ages, Adler speaks of the conflict of art and prudence as "inevitable," and pretends that this inevitability was recognized by the scholastic philosophers. For the scholastics, however, art is simply good workmanship and prudence is counsel or deliberation with respect to a choice in action. For them to speak of an inherent conflict of art and prudence would be like speaking to-day of a conflict between skill and foresight. Nor did the scholastics conceive of the fine arts in Adler's sense as liberal arts—the artist conveying *knowledge* of his soul or mind (an expressionistic view entirely foreign to scholasticism and mediaeval practice). For such a distortion of medieval thought Adler must depend on the eclectic Maritain, rather than on Thomas or Bonaventure. Similarly his notion of the "inviolable autonomy" of the artists, which is one of the theoretical sources of the conflict of art and prudence, is so foreign to the scholastics that it is inconceivable how a Catholic scholar could attribute this modern "Protestant error" to the medieval church. The latter thought of the sculptor as an artisan who faithfully carried out the assignments of the church.

If, as Adler says in defense of mediocre and corrupt art, "human society includes all kinds of men and the hierarchy of the arts is responsive to the hierarchy of needs," it is even more difficult to understand why there should be a conflict between art and morals. He distinguishes elsewhere, it is true, between moral and artistic needs. Against those who condemn a work of art as immoral he insists that the goodness of art must not be confused with morals; and against those who refuse to consider the consequences of art for morality he argues that morality is superior to art. But after having taken such pains to distinguish moral from aesthetic criticism, the first being called extrinsic and the other intrinsic, and after having bludgeoned several innocent writers for neglecting this distinction, he concludes towards the end of his book that the two criticisms are finally inseparable, that "both moral and technical criteria inevitably enter into the intrinsic criticism of works of fine art. They are only analytically separable, as the soul of the artist and his art are analytically separable as principal and instrumental causes of the work done." It is not made clear why the two should be inseparable nor why the separation should be "important for the sake of clarity" if it leads to confusions.

As a Catholic Adler must make moral values central in the conception of a work of art. His assertion of the superiority of medieval art (Dante and the cathedrals) could not be supported on the basis of technical or formal excellence alone. The greatness of a work varies as the goodness of its subject matter, presupposing, of course, its technical perfection. But this conception of the

content lies finally in the moral values of the artist, since he is representing human actions and moral problems. The moral values are judged by an eternal morality, a morality independent of particular social conditions. On the other hand, an artist who deals with contemporary social experience from the viewpoint of a single group is not dealing with moral problems; according to Adler he is dealing with irrelevant "sociological" matter and is bound to produce bad art. If some Russian films, like "Potemkin," are good it is in spite of their "alien burden of propaganda and sociology." He forgets here his principle that contemporary moralities are only local determinations of the eternal moral laws—the moral values in "Potemkin" were those accepted by the community in which it was produced—and that moral and technical criteria are inseparable. The conflicts that arise from the desire of human beings for freedom and well-being cease to be human actions and moral problems for Adler once they are tainted with contemporaneity; they become an alien burden of propaganda and sociology. (Since he calls openly for the extermination of sociologists, in fact of all teachers who are not "trained" in his metaphysics, we can imagine what "prudence" supported by state power would prescribe for the inviolably autonomous art with an "alien burden.") This is the church view; but this view would have excluded the Divine Comedy, the Evangiles and even the Old Testament, which abounds in theocratic propaganda and partisan reference to momentary conflicts. Following Maritain, Adler says that the artist should "express himself fully"—provided he has no interest in the present and is fully orthodox in his social convictions. If he happens to hold radical views he cannot be a good artist, as *a priori* demonstration from first principles shows.

Adler's concern for the liberty of the artist is positively touching. But in the particular context of the book the "inviolable autonomy" of the artist is nothing other than the right of the movie industry to produce the films which are profitable to it. If the Catholic church has attacked the movies, Adler comes forward to assure the owners that the church alone respects their inviolable autonomy as producers of the greatest modern art, that Catholic doctrine resolutely denounces those liberal and radical busy-bodies who wish to see films with a morality not accepted by "society," but the movies ought to conform to Christian morality for the sake of art as well as decency, since technical and moral criteria are inseparable. The church will not dictate what should be made or how it should be made, but rather "what shall be received and by whom and under what conditions." In this alliance against sin Hollywood and Rome represent the eternal interests of art and prudence. The producers need not, of course, imperil their investment by trying to turn out masterpiecs; just as superstitions are necessary to keep the ignorant contented, so there must be films "proportioned" to their lower intelligence and needs. The people require a purgative as well as an opiate; the films which effect this purgation are

indispensable to social stability. But the dose must be properly proportioned, according to the rules of morals and art supplied by the perennial tradition. Hollywood has in its own self-imposed code adequate criteria of moral propriety which assure conformity with customs and the maintenance of the existing order. If conflicts and uncertainties remain, Adler reminds us that only a perfected Christian wisdom can solve them, and then "only in ideal terms—the ideal of a supernatural perfection healing the wound of intellect divided against will. . . . Christian wisdom alone can completely reconcile Art and Prudence, since it is endowed with the outlook of Good and ranges over Action and Making alike." It can also reconcile these moral pretensions with an open indifference to, and even defense of, actual miseries. What shall we say of a moralist who at one point quotes with pietistic unctuousness the phrase of Léon Bloy on the pitiable state of those who do not even wish to become saints, and at another announces that God doesn't expect all of us to become saints, that we are not all capable of the highest Christian virtue? The priggishness of the book is so evident that even the author feels compelled on his last pages to apologize, but not to prune his moralizing and fulminations. In dealing with such serious matters, he tells us, one cannot help being so solemn and insistent on virtue. But all the incense to moral goodness cannot overcome the stale odor of these old and self-contradicted arguments of reaction.

Dr. Johnson and the Old Order

BY STUART GERRY BROWN

NEARLY all literary history is written from an idealist point of view, *i.e.* upon the assumption that ideas are the moving forces in all history, literary as well as political, economic, religious or philosophical. According to this view authors either originate ideas and pass them on to others or borrow already existing ideas and develop them; and this sort of criticism has borne much fruit. But it has at least two serious weaknesses: (1) it cannot fail to be criticism of surfaces only, and (2) it tends to shape and solidify patterns of critical judgment which change only as literary thought moves backward and forward between classicism and romanticism.

There could hardly be a better illustration of the sterility in which literary idealism finds itself than the criticism of Dr. Johnson. According to the well established tradition Johnson is the type of the wise conservative, a kind of symbol of all that is best in an English man of letters. From Boswell to John Bailey there has been little difference of opinion; and the deviation of Macaulay is easily explained because Johnson was a sort of sentimental Jacobite and "Stuart" was Macaulay's "red herring." From their first introduction to the old "dictator" in high school right through graduate courses in eighteenth century literature students are presented with a Johnson who stood four-square for the Christian virtues and the wisdom and art of the ancients. The Age of Johnson is sharply cut off from the immediately ensuing Age of Wordsworth as though in the course of a year or two the old tenets of literary convention were re-examined, found wanting and discarded. Critics like the late Irving Babbitt, for example, can deal in successive essays with Johnson and Coleridge without giving any indication that Coleridge was a youth in the Age of Johnson and had his roots in a literary and philosophic tradition which was already well developed, though it had little in common with the tradition Johnson is supposed to have upheld.[1] Babbitt, it is true, recognized elsewhere that there was a connection between the two traditions but seems to have thought that there would have been no very large Romantic Movement if there had been no Rousseau. What he failed to see is that literary history, as well as any other history, is

1 See Babbitt's *On Being Creative and Other Essays* (1932).

dynamic, and that Rousseau was not an accident but the flower of a deep-rooted movement toward social change. Dr. Johnson thought Rousseau was a rascal and Babbitt approved his judgment; but Johnson also agreed with certain views of Rousseau's, and this Babbitt did not notice.

Let us forget then, for the present at least, the conventional picture of Johnson the typical Britisher and ideal man of letters whose words are still quoted in Parliament by conservative members, and examine a portion of his writings which have always been recognized as important but seldom read: his writings on the problem of evil. We shall find some things which do not fit the picture, which would not even now be quoted by a Conservative member of Parliament, because they tend to cast doubt upon the sanctity of classical philosophy and Christian theology and foreshadow the open revolt which came a few years after his death.

The problem of evil was perhaps a liver issue in the eighteenth century than it ordinarily is, for it is raised in an acute form by deism and the related philosophy of optimism, and these theories were of major importance from the time of Locke until the Christian revival of the nineteenth century. Dozens of treatises, pamphlet essays and sermons on evil were published and numerous controversies arose. The most important treatise for our purpose is Soame Jenyns' *Free Inquiry into the Nature and Origin of Evil* (1757), for Johnson attacked it in a review which has a lasting historical significance. Jenyns was a country gentleman of considerable fortune, who, after leaving St. John's College, Cambridge, devoted his life to Tory politics and more or less dilettante writing of poems and essays. Until middle age he was a deist and his *Free Inquiry* is the fruit of his thinking on deism. In the years following, however, he turned more and more to Christianity and finally, in 1776, published his *View of the Internal Evidence of the Christian Religion* which marked his definite conversion. But his most widely read book was the *Free Inquiry*. The *Critical Review* hailed it in a long review with copious quotations to reveal its beauties of style and argument, concluding that it was the "work of an able and judicious writer." The fact that the book reached four editions within a year shows that the intellectual climate was extraordinarily receptive to work of this kind. According to Boswell, "Jenyns was possessed of lively talents, and a style eminently pure and easy, and could very happily play with a light subject, either in prose or verse; but when he speculated on that most difficult and excruciating question, the Origin of Evil, he 'ventured far beyond his depth,' and, accordingly, was exposed by Johnson, both with acute argument and brilliant wit."[2] Johnson did indeed expose Jenyns, but in so doing he accomplished much more; for the argument of the *Free Inquiry* had a long history before Jenyns used it. This

2 *Boswell's Life of Johnson* (ed. G. B. Hill). vol. 1, p. 315.

history is of great importance, and we shall do well to review it.

The theory which Jenyns expounded of a "scale of being" from "infinity to nothing" with its corollary of a perfect whole whose parts are only apparently imperfect, or imperfect only with reference to the whole, goes back in some aspects to Aristotle's *Metaphysics* and *De Anima* and in others to the Stoic physics. The "Supreme Being" at the top of the scale is originally the Absolute (Unmoved Mover) of the *Metaphysics,* plus some of the accretions of seventeen hundred years of Christianity. In the *De Anima* Aristotle argued that the human soul (as also the souls of all animate beings) is of like kind with the soul of the Absolute, but differs very greatly in degree. It is to be defined in terms of motion, that is to say, as the cause of motion on a principle roughly analogous to magnetism. As the Absolute is the motionless center of the universe, so the soul of man is the motionless center of his being. So it is with the Stoic physics, which on the same principle of motion postulated for its deductions a chain of being infinitely perfect. For our purpose the important thing is the moral contribution of the Stoics. Aristotle's ethics can be divorced from his cosmology, or at least may be applied separately. But this is not so of the ethics of the Stoics. They answered the question of evil with a paradox: the universe, which is a perfect whole, is composed of imperfect parts, which is to say that evil is only apparent. And they seemed not to be troubled by the contradiction involved in teaching a practical morality for avoiding evil. In one form or another this paradox has appeared from time to time ever since the philosophers of the Porch. But the scale of being has had a separate history. It may be found implied or explicit in nearly all metaphysics based on Aristotle, as for example St. Thomas, who avoided the Stoic paradox in the matter of evil, though he fell into other contradictions equally serious. An important variation on the chain or scale of being is the theory of emanation from the One expounded by Plotinus in his *Enneads.*

It will be readily apparent that the scale of being is extraordinarily well adapted to the use of thinkers who wish to find philosophic support for a static conception of society; for it asserts the inherent necessity of subordination. All that needs to be supplied is a basis for gradation, in most cases some arrangement of property distribution. Thus in the Middle Ages the Church found it valuable for support of the feudal system in which it had a major interest. In the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries the theory was revived to give sanctity to a plan of subordination based on land rent when this economy was under attack by the rising bourgeoisie. It was later used by the British bourgeoisie itself when the American colonists began to eat into its profits.[3] And this is reflected

3 See Karl Marx, *Capital* vol. I, p. 826 (Modern Library ed.): "Some decades later the colonial system took its revenge on the descendants of the pious pilgrim fathers, who had grown seditious in the meantime. At English instigation and for English pay they were tomahawked

in eighteenth century literature. According to Professor Lovejoy, "there has been no period in which writers of all sorts—men of science and philosophers, poets and popular essayists, deists and orthodox divines—talked so much about the Chain of Being, or accepted more implicitly the general scheme of ideas connected with it, or more boldly drew from these their latent implications."[4] Voltaire and Dr. Johnson, as Lovejoy has remarked, led the attack on the theory, though Johnson had no use for Voltaire, calling him "a judge without exception, if his honesty were equal to his knowledge."[5] Voltaire attacked it because he recognized its implications for the defense of the old order. Why Dr. Johnson should have done so is an object of the present inquiry.

The scale of being made its first significant appearance in English philosophy with John Locke who popularized it in his *Essay Concerning Human Understanding*. Addison, for example, devotes Spectator No. 519 to an exposition of the idea that "Infinite Goodness seems to delight in conferring Existence upon every degree of Perceptive Being," and not only acknowledges Locke as his source but quotes a page of the *Essay*. The poet Akenside in his *Pleasures of the Imagination* (1744), though he does not acknowledge a debt to Locke, gives poetic expression to the chain of being, and shows a strong tendency toward the neo-Platonic idealism of Plotinus; while James Thomson touches the same theme in the "Spring" section of his *Seasons*. The merging of this idea with the optimism of Archbishop King and Leibniz (the germ of which is already present in Locke) and the neo-stoicism of France produced English deism. King's *De Origine Mali* appeared in 1702 but did not gain wide currency until it was translated by Edmund Law in 1731. It went through five editions by 1781 in this translation, and Law himself earned a reputation as a philosopher of optimism and evil by his appended dissertation on the *Origin of the Passions*. King adopted the scale of being from Locke and Plotinus and employed it for the explanation of "natural evils." He was too good a Christian, however, to avoid the unpleasant fact of moral evil on such pleasant grounds, and he presents on this question the orthodox theory of the depravation of man at the Fall.

Much of the credit for the formulation of deism is due to Bolingbroke, who had been impressed by the revival of stoicism during his exile in France. He was an ardent Jacobite and staunch supporter of the old order against the Rebellion; and his writing clearly reflects the interest of the landed aristocracy as opposed to the new capitalists.[6] In his *Fragments* (1752) he follows King closely on the matter of natural evil, but, as Lovejoy says, he "derived the necessity of moral

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by redskins. The British Parliament proclaimed bloodhounds and scalping as 'means that God and Nature had given into its hand'."

4 *The Great Chain of Being* (1936), pp. 183-84.

5 Johnson, *Works*, vol. VI, p. 440.

6 See *Capital, op. cit.*, p. 828.

evil directly from the principle of plenitude. If men had been so constituted as to follow always the ethical 'law of nature . . . the moral state of mankind would have been paradisaical, but it would not have been human. We would not have been the creatures we were designed to be, and a gap would have been left in the order of created intelligences'."[7]

But the most popular expression of deism was Pope's *Essay on Man.* Pope derived his ideas directly from Bolingbroke, who was his friend, and indirectly from King. That the poem was un-Christian, Pope, a Roman Catholic, did not realize and this is a point of some significance. For it shows how well prepared he and his circle were to accept any philosophical justification for the existing gradations of society. Bishop Warburton, who undertook to prove that the *Essay* was a Christian poem, defended Pope in this way. Writing a note to the famous lines,

> *And, spite of Pride, in erring Reason's spite,*
> *One truth is clear, Whatever is, is Right.*

he says, "That Nature being neither a blind chain of Causes and Effects, nor yet the fortuitous result of wandering atoms, but the wonderful Art and Direction of an all-wise, all-good, and Free being; Whatever is, is Right, with regard to the disposition of God, and its ultimate Tendency; which once granted, all complaints against Providence are at an end."[8] Dr Johnson's criticism of the *Essay on Man* is mainly literary, but there is one passage in which he "exposes" the doctrine in something of the same fashion as we shall see him treating Jenyns:

"Having exalted himself into the chair of wisdom he tells us much that every man knows, and much that he does not know himself; that we see but little, and that the order of the universe is beyond our comprehension, an opinion not very uncommon; and that there is a chain of subordinate beings 'from infinite to nothing,' of which himself and his readers are equally ignorant. But he gives us one comfort which, without his help, he supposes unattainable, in the position 'that though we are fools, yet God is wise'."[9]

Much of his material Jenyns took over directly from Pope, so that the review of the *Free Inquiry* gives us Johnson's full critique of Pope's doctrine, and thus answers all the currents of thought, with respect to morality at least, which, we have seen, converge in deism. It is not an exaggeration, therefore, to call the *Review* Johnson's most important piece of philosophical writing. Jenyns' treatise, which is in the form of six letters to a friend, presents the problem in this way:

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7 Lovejoy, *op cit.*, p. 223.

8 *Pope's Poetical Works* (Globe ed.), p. 200.

9 Johnson, *Lives of the Poets* (ed. G. B. Hill), vol. III, p. 243.

"To find out—how Evil of any kind can be the production of infinite Goodness, joined with infinite Power."[10]

Before plunging into the solution of this dilemma Jenyns dismisses the "Manichean heresy" as a manifest contradiction, (there cannot be two *first* causes), so often refuted as not to warrant his attention. Next he implicitly rejects the Christian theory of the Fall by condemning all "fanciful" accounts of a one-time earthly paradise, and asserting dogmatically that there must always have been evil in the world. In the next five letters, in which he treats of "Evils of Imperfection," "Natural Evils," "Political Evils," "Moral Evils" and "Religious Evils," he presents the theory of a "vast chain of being" where the law of subordination directs all things to the greater glory of the Supreme Being; a theory which, by relegating evils to the realm of appearance, effectively denies their existence and contradicts his major premise. Here is a passage, taken from the second letter, which may fairly serve as an example of the argument all through the book:

"The Universe is a system whose very essence consists in subordination; a scale of Being descending by insensible degrees from infinite perfection to absolute nothing; in which, though we may justly expect to find perfection in the whole, could we possibly comprehend it; yet it would be the highest absurdity to hope for it in all its parts, because the beauty and happiness of the whole depend altogether on the just inferiority of its parts, that is, on the comparative imperfections of the several beings of which it is composed. . . .

"Thus the Universe resembles a large and well-regulated Family, in which all the officers and servants, and even the domestic animals, are subservient to each other in a proper subordination: each enjoys the privileges and perquisites peculiar to his place, and at the same time contributes by that just subordination to the magnificence and happiness of the whole.

"It is evident, therefore, that these Evils of Imperfection, proceeding from the necessary inferiority of some Beings in comparison of others, can in no sense be called any Evils at all."

One would be inclined, in the light of the traditional picture of Dr. Johnson, to suppose that an argument of this kind, directed as it is toward providing philosophical and religious justification for the conservative order of society, would have appealed to him. He would perhaps have noticed the logical blunders, but would have lent his support to the idea involved. But Johnson had not always been welcome at the houses of the great or moved in a society of well-to-do professional men, artists and men of letters. In his younger days he had known the miseries of Grub Street, the despair that comes with an empty stomach, and had written in his *Vanity of Human Wishes*:

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10 All citations from the *Free Inquiry* are from the fourth edition, revised, Dublin, 1785.

Reign on the passing world to turn thine eyes,
And pause a while from learning, to be wise;
There mark what ills the scholar's life assail,
Toil, envy, want, the patron, and the jail.

And he had not forgotten the lessons of that experience. Here is his reply to Jenyns:

"It does not appear, even to the imagination, that of three orders of being, the first and the third receive any advantages from the imperfection of the second, or that, indeed, they may not equally exist, though the second had never been, or should cease to be; and why should that be concluded necessary, which cannot be proved even to be useful.

"The scale of existence, from infinity to nothing, cannot possibly have being. The highest being not infinite, must be, as had often been observed, at an infinite distance below infinity."[11]

This sort of blunt demolition of an opposing view represents Johnson at his critical best. It reminds us of another matter in which he was anything but conservative: the absolute laws of the drama, the "unities." In his *Preface to Shakespeare* he disposed of them once and for all. In connection with this same argument about subordination in the scale of being Johnson is also more positive:

"Perfection, or imperfection, of unconscious beings has no meaning, as referred to themselves; the base and the treble are equally perfect; the mean and magnificent apartments feel no pleasure or pain from the comparison. Pope might ask the weed, why it was less than the oak? but the weed would never ask the question of itself. The base and the treble differ only to the hearer, meanness and magnificence only to the inhabitant. There is no evil but must inhere in a conscious being, or be referred to it; that is, evil must be felt, before it is evil."[12]

Here is a surprisingly realistic view of evil, a view which closely approaches the relative theory of several modern liberal philosophies; and it is not, as we shall see, unique in Johnson's writings.

Perhaps the most bitterly effective criticism in the whole review is Johnson's attack on Jenyns' attempt to explain away social evils by a theory of compensation. For example, Jenyns argues about education in this fashion: "Ignorance, or the want of knowledge and literature, the appointed lot of all born to poverty and the drudgeries of life, is the only opiate capable of infusing that insensibility, which can enable them to endure the miseries of the one, and the fatigues of the other. It is a cordial, administered by the gracious hand of providence, of which they ought never to be deprived by an ill-judged and improper education."

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11 Johnson, *Works*, vol. VI, p. 52.

12 *Ibid.*, p. 50.

Obviously he owes his position to Mandeville here, as much as to deism. All the miseries of poverty as well as social evils in general, in this view, have their alleviations; and the explanations Jenyns offers are practically the same as the one we have quoted. Here is Johnson:

"That hope and fear are inseparably, or very frequently connected with poverty and riches, my surveys of life have not informed me. The milder degrees of poverty are, sometimes, supported by hope; but the more severe often sink down in motionless despondence. Life must be seen, before it can be known. This author and Pope, perhaps, never saw the miseries which they imagine thus easy to be borne. The poor, indeed, are insensible of many little vexations, which sometimes imbitter the possessions, and pollute the enjoyments of the rich. They are not pained by casual incivility, or mortified by the mutilation of a compliment; but this happiness is like that of a malefactor, who ceases to feel the cords that bind him, when the pincers are tearing his flesh.[13]

This is the spirited answer of a man who has known poverty himself, who has had good cause to meditate on evils as they exist in the world rather than in the mind or imagination of a theorist. If he could have little patience with the logical blunders of Jenyns, he could have still less for this smug condescension and justification for what he knew to be very great wrongs. The passage was written by a man whose pamphlet *Taxation no Tyranny* was a bitter attack on the American revolutionary movement;[14] but it reflects a mind which was not merely an instrument for the conservative tradition, but a mind prepared by experience and insight to receive the germs of the new rationalism which pointed toward deep-rooted social change. What we have, clearly, is not a picture of homogeneous harmony, but a picture of vital contradiction.

When Jenyns comes to the question of moral evil he re-asserts the theory of subordination in the scale of being, of the necessity for the sake of perfection that there should be man in this scale. The logic of his argument now drives him, as he is willing it should, to deny that there ever was a time when man was perfect or when moral evil did not exist. In fact, according to Jenyns, such a state of affairs could not even be imagined because it would be an express contradiction of the law of subordination. In order to overthrow this position Johnson again chose to speak with some positiveness:

"The perfection which man once had, may be so easily conceived, that, without any unusual strain of imagination, we can figure its revival. All the duties

13 *Op. cit.*, pp. 54-55.

14 For example: "Chains is, undoubtedly, a dreadful word; but, perhaps, the masters of civil wisdom may discover some gradations between chains and anarchy. Chains need not be put upon those who will be restrained without them. This contest may end in the softer phrase of English superiority and American obedience." (*Works*, vol. VI, p. 262) It has been argued that Johnson's pension (1763) purchased him for the uses of the Crown; but I find it difficult to believe that the influence upon him could have been conscious.

to God or man, that are neglected, we may fancy performed; all the crimes, that are committed, we may conceive forborne. Man will then be restored to his moral perfections; and into what head can it enter, that, by this change, the universal system would be shaken, or the condition of any order of beings altered for the worse?"[15]

This criticism springs from Johnson's customary Christian position and involves belief in the Fall of man; but it effectively answers Jenyns and, as we shall see presently, Johnson could assert its conclusions without reference to Christian theology. What he has done in the *Review* (for which Jenyns never forgave him) is to expose Jenyns' contradictions and make it plain that, so far from increasing the glory of God, such arguments tend to obliterate the distinction between good and evil, and finally lead to the breakdown of ethics.

In the *Review* Johnson is attacking a theory which both asserts and denies freedom of the will and purposive choice; and this is the basic contradiction which enabled him to demolish it. The Christian view from which he directed his attack, on the other hand, begins with a dogmatic assertion of free will and refers evil to choice. Johnson thus lays down the position in his fifth sermon:

"We are informed by the Scriptures, that God is not the author of our present state; that when he created man, he created him for happiness; happiness indeed dependent upon his own choice, and to be preserved by his own conduct: for such must necessarily be the happiness of every reasonable being; that this happiness was forfeited by a breach of the conditions to which it was annexed; and that the posterity of him that broke the covenant were involved in the consequences of his fault. Thus religion shows us that physical and moral evil entered the world together; and reason and experience assure us, that, to avoid misery, we must avoid sin, and that, while it is in our power to be virtuous, it is in our power to be happy, at least, to be happy to such a degree, as may leave little room for murmur and complaints.[16]

This theory requires, for the explanation of evil, belief in an imaginative conception, the Fall of Man. The Fall is essential to the Anglican, as to the Roman Catholic view. Many other Christian societies have been unable to accept it and have fallen as a result into bad logic, or, like Calvinism, have been unwilling to accept the necessary corollary of free will. Yet the Fall rests on quite logical foundations. That is to say, it harmonizes with the rest of Christian teaching; and Johnson, at least, would have maintained that it conforms to what is apparent in the world.

This, then, is the thesis which Johnson advances in the sermon on evil. The key to the whole question, in his view, was the moral responsibility of each

15 *Op. cit.*, 73-74.

16 Johnson, *Works*, vol. IX, p. 332-33.

individual human being. The oft-repeated dictum that "all theory is against the freedom of the will; all experience for it" is apparently the bottom of his belief. All evils spring from my mistaken, but willful choice, or from yours which may affect me. If we will all only follow the precepts of religion we will no longer antagonize one another, and we may give our time together to the task of overcoming evils to which all humanity is subject and which we may reasonably expect in time to abolish. Furthermore, our state, when virtue is generally attained, will clearly be better than that "state of nature" to which the naturalistic rationalists are always appealing and are always recommending to us; for we shall have, in addition to the happiness which goodness alone can bring, also the benefits of civilization which are very great. Thus Johnson argues. It is his religious imagination and the New Testament which have moved him to so positive a pronouncement.

I say the New Testament thus moved him. But consider this interesting fact: in neither the *Review* nor the sermon does he refer to the sacrifice of Christ which was for him the essence of Christianity. According to Christian teaching man, after the Fall, was damned until the Redemption of the Saviour Christ; yet Johnson did not see fit to mention this essential matter either in his attack on deism or his exposition of the Christian theory of evil. Now, if we suppose that he had also left out the Fall and had merely asserted that in some way man is responsible for his actions and free to choose, what have we left? Clearly we have a utilitarian ethic quite in conformity with the sort of "natural religion" advocated by the "philosophers," as for example Diderot. Let us, in this connection, look at a passage in Johnson's *Idler* No. 89:

Of justice one of the Heathen sages has shown, with great acuteness, that it was impressed upon mankind only by the inconveniencies which injustice had produced. In the first ages, says he, men acted without any rule but the impulse of desire; they practised injustice upon others, and suffered it from others in their turn; but in time it was discovered, that the pain of suffering wrong was greater than the pleasure of doing it; and mankind, by a general compact, submitted to the restraint of laws, and resigned the pleasure to escape the pain,"[17]

Here is a strange passage to be found in the writings of Dr. Johnson; for it speaks of a morality which is not static at all, not dependent on eternal ideas nor yet the commandment of God, but a morality which is dynamic and almost evolutionary. It looks forward toward modern anthropological conclusions, rather than backward toward Plato and the Bible. One cannot doubt that it welled up out of his memory of the days when he had shared intimately the experience of the class which the laws are meant to restrain; though the pleasant

17 Johnson, *Works,* vol. IV, pp. 412-413. In another place Johnson developed the same idea more fully, *Rambler* No. 33.

life upon the upper level had successfully blunted his resentment. Rousseau would not have agreed with it indeed, but Hume would have approved. Now, Johnson begins this *Idler* essay on evil with this: "Religion informs us that misery and sin were produced together. The depravation of human will was followed by a disorder of the harmony of nature," and so forth. This is the Fall of Man clearly enough. Has Johnson, then, forgotten that the "Heathen Sage," with whom he agrees, had no such conception? I am afraid that he has quite forgotten. In fact, as the essay develops, it becomes apparent that the chief argument, that moral good arises from physical evil, is not at all dependent upon the original assumption, save as that assumption enables him to avoid treating the problem of origins. Take the passage on charity for example:

"Of charity it is superfluous to observe, that it could have no place if there were no want; for of a virtue which could not be practised, the omission could not be culpable. Evil is not only the occasional, but the efficient cause of charity; we are incited to the relief of misery by the consciousness that we have the same nature with the sufferer, that we are in danger of the same distresses, and may sometimes implore the same assistance."[18]

All that is Christian in this passage is the tacit assumption that misery itself came into the world with the "depravation of human will," and the reason for practising charity is purely utilitarian: it works better than if we did not practise it. Again, notice the passage on piety:

"Godliness, or piety, is elevation of the mind toward the Supreme Being, and extension of the thoughts to another life. The other life is future, and the Supreme Being is invisible. None would have recourse to an invisible power, but that all other subjects have eluded their hopes. None would fix their attention upon the future, but that they are discontented with the present."[19]

Johnson is here thinking in terms of reason, empirically, as a rationalist would. Notice the phrase "Supreme Being" in the definition of piety. That, or First Cause, is the stock term of the rationalist philosophers whom he attacked in the *Review* of Jenyns.

The point is sufficiently clear and I do not wish to labor it. In this *Idler* essay what Johnson says is not opposed to Christianity; but it is not written as a believing Christian would write it. Rather we seem to be listening to skeptical empiricist who wishes to be conventionally respectful to a traditional faith. What is most important to remark about the essay, as also about the *Review* and the sermon, is the absence of any mention of the sacrifice of Christ. As a Christian Johnson knew well enough that the doctrine of the Fall of Man is necessarily complemented by the Atonement to make a complete dramatic view of the

18 *Op. cit.*, p. 413.

19 *Loc. cit.*

history of man's misery. But he seems quite unaware that this omission renders his arguments un-Christian.

Thus far we have seen Johnson defending free will and referring the origin of evil to it, once or twice speaking with the faith of a Christian, but more often as an empirical moralist with little attention to Christian theology. In this he is consistent: that he wishes to refer the responsibility for evil to man and not to God. Let us now see what he says on this question in his essay on stoicism.

The stoics, says Johnson, were the "scholars of Zeno, whose wild enthusiastick virtue pretended to an exemption from the sensibilities of unenlightened mortals, and who proclaimed themselves exalted, by the doctrines of their sect, above the reach of those miseries which imbitter life to the rest of the world."[20] He loses no time in exposing the fallacy of the stoic paradox, and points out that "if pain be not an evil, there seems no instruction requisite how it may be borne." The central thesis, after he has dismissed the stoic theory and practice as illogical, is that the "cure for the greatest part of human miseries is not radical, but palliative." For "infelicity is involved in corporeal nature, and interwoven with our being." For example, certain evils "are allotted to us by Providence, such as deformity, privation of any of the senses, or old age." These, of course, are physical, or as Jenyns would have classified them, natural evils; and they are not often referable to human choice. It would be unfair to charge Johnson with an inconsistency on this point, for when he asserts that the origin of evil is to be found in man's freedom of choice he clearly intends moral evil. Yet as he elaborates his theme in this essay the idea of human responsibility is conspicuously absent. This is the way he concludes:

"The chief security against the fruitless anguish of impatience, must arise from frequent reflection on the wisdom and goodness of the God of nature, in whose hands are riches and poverty, honour and disgrace, pleasure and pain, and life and death. . . ."

Thus it is not man nor yet the Christian God who is responsible for evil, but the "God of nature." And this, one recalls, was the only God the eighteenth-century rationalists would admit.

Unfortunately the chronology of Johnson's various pronouncements on the problem of evil offers us no warrant for supposing that the contradictions in his thought were gradually resolved as his theories were developed and his experience broadened. The *Rambler* essays precede the *Review,* and the *Idler* follows it; while the sermon cannot be dated at all. Thus the conclusion seems inescapable that he was simply not aware that his views were self-contradictory. Looked at in one way these contradictions make Johnson seem a sort of passive reflection of the great clash between the English Christian tradition and the growing natural-

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20 The quotations in this paragraph are from *Rambler* No. 32, in *Works,* vol. II, p. 156.

istic rationalism; in another way he appears as the type of the eighteenth century, in a sense very much different from that usually carried by the stock expression.

The documents which we have been considering, when taken together, give a fairly complete idea of the ways in which thinking men in the eighteenth century looked at the problem most prominent in the philosophy of their time. According to Harold J. Laski: "The average Englishman of the eighteenth century was . . . at peace even when he was at war. He felt that he had made his bargain with fate. It was with the details rather than with the principles of the system under which he lived that he concerned himself. The Whig compromise had made room for the bourgeoisie."[21] This was because the English middle class had made its revolution in the seventeenth century, and was now consolidating its gains. But the struggle of land against merchant and manufacturing capital continued and during Johnson's lifetime (1709-1784) the propertyless proletarians rapidly increased in numbers and their struggle against both land and business began to accelerate its pace.[22] This is the social basis upon which Soame Jenyns wrote his *Free Inquiry* and Bolingbroke his *Fragments,* both in defense of the past as it lingered in the present; upon this same basis Hume wrote his *Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion* and Bentham his treatise on usury, both of which pointed forward toward the liberalism of the nineteenth century; and the significance of Dr. Johnson is precisely that he was on both sides, in contradiction with himself. He was, in a sense, as his writings reflect, caught between the old order and the new and he did not always know which way to turn.

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21 *The Rise of Liberalism* (1936), p. 181.

22 John Wesley's Methodist movement was indirectly engendered by the increase in numbers of the proletariat, and fed it with "spiritual sustenance." It is significant that Dr. Johnson, in general, favored the aims of the Methodists and believed that they were "of use among the lower classes of mankind."

Chronicles and Discussion

Bourgeois Origins of Nominalism

In his communication to the *Marxist Quarterly* (April-June 1937), James Feibleman raises, on the whole, seven objections to my treatment of nominalism. Owing to reasons of space I can deal with two of them only at some length. As regards the other five, although they would deserve a fuller treatment, I can merely hint at what would be my answer.

1. First of all we must get our definitions clear. Feibleman defines *nominalism* as the thesis that "universals are fictions of the mind, a proposition which renders particular things ultimate and real, and denies the mental interpretation of these real things."[1]

a. Now, if Occam was a nominalist—and I think we can take that for granted in this discussion—Feibleman's definition is not correct, although it can claim the authority of some dictionaries. Occam expressly *denies* that universals are fictions of the mind, because that would destroy the objective validity of universals and the practical value of experimental science.[2] Universals are not purely imaginary, they have a basis in reality. What is characteristic of modern nominalism is not a clear-cut theory as to the relation of universals to reality but a wavering uncertainty about what corresponds to universals in reality, an uncertainty which has never left the nominalist to this very day, being of the very essence of the theory.

On the one side we hear that the commonness which the universals express is based on an objective *conventia* of things in *reality*.[3] It is based on an aptitude, a "gentle force," as Hume called it later on, in the particulars. The universal is even called a *similitudo rei*.[4] On the other hand, by denying reality to relations, Occam reduces the objective world to a chaos of isolated individuals, for the uniformity of and the similarity between individual things is a relation. Universals are symbols which stand for (*supponunt*) individual things, that is

1 The part after "and" I fail to understand.

2 A good collection of the passages appear in N. Abbagnano, *Guglielmo di Ockham* (1931), p. 91 *et seq.*

3 Ritter, *M. von Inghen und die okhamistiche Schule in Deutschland* (1921), pp. 60, 118; Hume, *A Treatise* etc., vol. 1, pp. 1, 5; E. Hochstetter, *Studien* (1927), p. 82 note.

4 Hochstetter, *op. cit.*, pp. 82, 103-108.

Occam's final formula. In this way universals have an objective validity, although the exact nature of their relation to reality remains rather obscure.[5]

b. Nor is the thesis that "only particular things are ultimate and real" in any way characteristic of nominalism only. There is, indeed, one type of "realism" which regards universals as self-subsistent entities that can exist independently of individual substances, and are prior to them (*Universalia ante rem*). But this Platonic form of realism, which was very widespread in the early Middle Ages, was opposed by a host of Aristotlean realists who claimed that only particular or individual things could exist independently, or separately. Universals only exist together with an individual substance, but they are nevertheless real. Abelard tried to define the kind of reality of these universals by calling them *"status,"* something which is neither a thing (*res*) nor nothing (*nihilum*).[6] (*Universalia in re*). The Aristotelean realists thus share with the nominalists the conviction that only individual things have a *separate existence* (*subsistentia*), but they ascribe *objective reality* to universals, while the nominalists spoke of *objective validity* only. This distinction may sound a bit subtle. Without it, however, we cannot understand the difference between the so-called "nominalist" doctrines before Occam and nominalism proper, to which we shall turn soon.

c. The *bourgeoisie* is "defined as the trading and mercantile class." While there have been traders in many periods of history the traders developed into a new class, into a bourgeoisie proper, in the fourteenth century, when they turned to *manufacturing*. The trader who turned manufacturer at that time steadily increased the productivity of labor by increasing the number of workers in each unit of production, by developing the division of labor and by introducing technical improvements and even machines. He more and more employed "free" workers. The manufacturer—far more than the trader—is interested in that control over nature which experimental science gradually rendered possible. A trader is a trader. He becomes a bourgeois only in that capitalist system of producing and manufacturing which gradually developed from the fourteenth century onward.

2. If it could be shown that Porphyry, Pyhhoh, Boethius and Roscellinus were nominalists, I would be wrong in asserting that nominalism has always been the doctrine of the bourgeoisie. We would in that case have nominalists who do not represent bourgeois aspirations. The point is vital for my theory. It also serves to illustrate the superiority of the concreteness of the Marxist approach

5 Elsewhere (in *Der Satz vom Widerspruch,* p. 237) I have attempted to show that this insecurity of nominalists about the relation of universals to reality is connected with a general estrangement from reality which is a consequence of the social position and social aspirations of the bourgeoisie.

6 I noticed that some dull-witted writers—mostly Protestant theologians—call this Aristotelean realist with Platonic leanings a "nominalist."

to that unhistorical treatment of philosophical tendencies which prevails in our textbooks. A Marxist would indeed be surprised to find that fundamentally identical doctrines should have arisen in fundamentally different historical circumstances. He therefore keeps his eyes open for differences which escape the friends of unhistorical definitions.

Porphyry, who in his *Eisagoge* "first raised the question of nominalism explicitly," gave evidence of logical acumen but not of a nominalist bias. *Pyrroh* is usually regarded as a skeptic who would not commit himself to any theory as regards universals, and for whom a nominalist doctrine would have been clearly incompatible with his desire for suspension of judgment.[7] *Boethius*, in his discussion of Porphyry, emphatically and unambiguously comes out for Aristotelean realism.[8] I therefore agree that "it has not yet been determined" whether Pyrroh and Boethius "were themselves members of the bourgeois class." I would add that it has equally not been determined whether they were at all nominalists.

The real problem lies with Roscellinus (1050 to 1120), and with the "nominalism" of the eleventh and twelfth century. I gladly take the opportunity to supplement my former article "by showing that the mentality of the so-called 'Nominalists' of the eleventh century was radically and profoundly different from that of the Nominalists of the fourteenth century."

In connection with Roscellin, we have first to bear in mind that he was not a person of great importance. The materialist conception of history is concerned with socially successful and representative ideas and not with the freaks. At any time one can find one writer or another who has said almost anything. Before he decides about the social basis of a doctrine a Marxist will want to know whether it was a typical doctrine in any way representative of anything or of anybody. As a matter of fact, Roscellin was an individual with few followers. John of Salisbury[9] reports that his doctrine "almost entirely disappeared with him" and "vanished with its originator." Similarly Abelard has little to say of Roscellin's (his teachers') doctrines, and passages in his *Dialectica* make it plain that he considered it little worthy of attention.[10] What notoriety Roscellin possessed at the time he did not derive from his teachings on universals but from his unorthodox interpretation of the doctrine of the Trinity which was attacked by Anselm of Canterbury, and condemned by the Council of Soissons in 1092.

Now, what about Roscellin's "nominalism"? While he was just an individual the prevalent doctrine of the time was a realism of the Platonic type. Roscellin,

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7 Pyrrho and his followers "were constantly engaged in overthrowing the dogmas of all schools, but enunciated none themselves." Diogenes Laertius IV, 74.

8 *In Isagogen Porphyrii Commenta* (ed. S. Brand 1906), especially pages 159 to 176. Boethius says of universals, of the genera and species, *"non est dubium quin vere sint"; "ista vere subistant"* (p. 26); *"sensibilibus juncta subsistunt in sensibilibus"* (p 176).

9 *Metalogicus* II, 17; *Policraticus* VII, 12.

10 J. G. Sikes, *Peter Abailard* (1932), p. 90.

indeed, was an opponent of that realism. But that in itself does not make him a nominalist.

De Wulf, a first-rate authority, states expressly that "it must be borne in mind that this twelfth century nominalism has a very special sense. It is different from the nominalism of the fourteenth century."[11] Roscellin's views are known to us only second-hand, only from the writings of his opponents. According to these very scanty reports Roscellin indulged in the somewhat paradoxical statement that, far from being the real realities in the world, the universals were *flatus vocis,* vocal emissions, composed of letters and syllables. By using the word *"vox"* he referred to the spoken word as to a physical sound, as distinguished from its meaning (*sermo*). This a way of opposing "Platonic" realism by a striking formula. But it is not nominalism. There is no evidence that Roscellin denied the reality of universals. "That is a question with which he does not deal."[12] Occam expressly rejected the opinion that the universal might be a *flatus vocis.*[13]

By reducing a doctrine to a bald statement one too easily tears it out of its context. The philosophical initiative, from Remigius of Auxerre (841-908) to Abelard (*circa* 1140), rested with "Pratonic" realism. According to this doctrine universals, *e.g.* humanity, have an independent existence, and the individual things, *e.g.* individual men, have their existence only as a modification of the universal substance, by participating in it. This doctrine was extremely popular at the time, not only among writers and teachers but also among men of action, for reasons into which I cannot go here.[14] It created a reaction, the representatives of which all agreed that only individual things could exist separately and independently or "substantially," and that universals are not things (*res*). They, however, did not conclude that universals had no reality in connection with individual substances. The opponents of "Platonic" realism therefore all inclined towards some form of Aristotelean realism which cannot be confused with modern nominalism. For the "universale in re" stands even though the "universale *ut* res" is denied.

We have thus replaced Roscellin's thesis into its context. In addition we may

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11 *History of Mediaeval Philosophy* (1935), vol. I, p. 197. When discussing Occam the same author states: "We need only compare the doctrines of Occam and of Roscellin to see how utterly misleading it is to label both these philosophers alike as nominalists. The two systems have nothing in common save the denial of extreme realism." (*History,* pp. 425-26). I am almost glad to think that the pious padre from Louvain will never know what sort of people make use of his patient researches.

12 De Wulf, vol. I, p. 149. Similarly Ueberweg-Geyer, *Geschichte der Philosophie,* p. 209.

13 *In sent.* I d. 2 q. 8. He describes the universal as a *terminus* or an *intentio.*

14 One of its motives was the interest in original sin which could easily be rendered plausible that way. For if what really exists is the human race as a specific reality, which is then scattered amongst its many individual representatives, the entire substance was infected by Adam's sin and by participating in that vitiated substance we all suffer from the consequences.

still look at its fruits. It is not only what a man says that matters but also where his doctrine leads him and others to. The radicals of the anti-realist reaction of the twelfth century were led to *skepticism* and *sophistry,* the nominalists of the fourteenth century to *empiricism,* to experiment and observation. The former formulated their doctrines with an eye on "Platonic" realism, Occam with an eye on observed reality.

Occam argued that, if only singulars are real objects and if only in perception we have immediate access to them, experience and observation become the test of true knowledge. In this way he laid the foundation of experimental science. His positive achievement in logic, the interpretation of concepts as symbols, openly contradicts the theory of the *flatus vocis.*

In the eleventh century the Church had reached a degree of corruption unusual even in the history of that body. In consequence new sects and heresies sprang up everywhere, and the doctrines of the Church became the object of destructive argument. Many clerics amused themselves as best they could. Some of them, with more intellectual tastes, spent some of their time in argument for its own sake and basked in the frivolity of their argumentations. They discussed whether a pig led to market is held by a rope or by the one leading it. They turned Roscellin's doctrine to good use by forming syllogisms like this one: "Mouse is a syllable; a syllable does not gnaw cheese; therefore a mouse does not gnaw cheese." This sort of thing was an intellectual by-product of clerical decay which was then, temporarily, brought to an end by the monastic reforms and the crusades. Not only sociologically but also in their spirit these early skeptics and the nominalists are miles apart.

3. When he states that nominalism "gave rise to the middle classes," Feibleman raises the question of the importance of intellectuals. This is a very vast problem, and I can only restate my conviction that the philosophers owe more to the people than the people owe to the philosophers. Making Occam into a sort of father of the bourgeoisie reminds me of a Nazi who argued that Adam Smith was the father of the industrial revolution. It seems to me that intellectuals should not be as conceited as all that. But, naturally, I cannot argue the point *here.*

4. While separating faith from reason, St. Thomas' theology is far more rational—in intention—than Occam's. According to him the articles of faith, like the doctrine of the Trinity, of original sin, of the sacraments, etc., could not be justified by reason but are compatible with reason. According to Occam and the nominalists they are incompatible. According to St. Thomas the articles of revealed faith are above reason but not against reason. Reason can justify them negatively, by showing that the objections of opponents are unfounded. In my argument I stressed not the point that the nominalists *separate* faith and reason—that is what St. Thomas does, too—but that they regard the doctrines of

the Church "to be in express opposition to reason."

5. Far from ignoring the history of science, I quoted Duhem, one of the leading authorities on the subject, in support of what I said about Jean de Jandun and astronomy. If Nicholas of Aresme wrote against the black arts, he did not do so because they were practical but because he was against magical, as opposed to rational, practice. He clearly voiced his contempt for pure theoreticians, and I must refer to my quotation in the original article.

Copernicus, as far as I know, was interested in obtaining accurate astronomical tables. Whether we can call this a "practical application of results" is largely a matter of opinion. It is also besides the point. What the Marxist claims is that a careful study of the history of modern science has shown more and more clearly that, whatever may have been the conscious motives of scientists (who like most people easily deceive themselves), their researches were very closely connected with the practical aspirations of the bourgeoisie.

6. As regards the principle of parsimony I must admit a weakness in my argumentation. I showed that it is a product of bourgeois mentality and that it is emphasized by nominalists. Assuming that no bourgeois philosopher can fail to be a nominalist, I believe I have shown indirectly that it is a nominalist principle. I should have given more direct proof. But I feel that Feibleman takes the word "realism" here in a very loose sense. "Realism," as the word is used in modern philosophy, in England and the United States, is often perfectly compatible with nominalism. I may say, incidentally, that in England C. E. M. Joad is not regarded as a philosopher but as a popular writer. Be that as it may, the problem, I think, deserves to be threshed out more thoroughly.

7. I believe, indeed, that Marxists cannot be nominalists. But I do not conclude that they must be realists. The world consists of *concrete* objects which are in themselves neither universals nor particulars. In certain situations we determine the concrete objects as universals *or* as particulars, but in most situations this question of universality or particularity does not arise, being irrelevant to our purpose. In this way, as I see it,[15] Marxism transcends both nominalism and realism.

The dialectic, tracing, as it does, the impulse of movements and changes to material contradictions, seems on the surface to involve a realism of the Aristotelean type. For a material contradiction is the conflict between the *essential* features of a process. But the "essential features of a process," as Marx *e.g.* understood them in his discussion of the contradictions of capitalism, while they are incompatible with nominalist assumptions, should not be confused with Aristotle's "essence." But that is clearly another story.

EDWARD CONZE

15 I must refer the reader to *Der Satz von Widerspruch,* pp. 243-66, where I have tried to justify this statement.

A Note on the Question of "Class Science"

One sometimes hears the authority of Karl Marx invoked in favor of the unqualified notion of class science. This notion is effectively made short shrift of by Sidney Hook in his last book, by pointing out in passing the fundamental distinction between "the truth-character of the findings of science and the social motives and conditions of scientific investigation." (From Hegel to Marx, p. 76). In less compressed terms, the distinction indicates the need to remember that the truth of a scientific assertion is verified through operations which disregard as subjective and impertinent the reasons why the inquiry was started. With this distinction in mind we can not intelligently speak of bourgeois physics or mathematics because bourgeois physicists and mathematicians conducted their investigations—as they undoubtedly often did—prompted by the needs of industry. No one today, it is hoped, will want to deny the fact that science has flourished in Europe in part at least in answer to these needs. But the needs, conscious or unconscious, which led to mathematical development, in no way affect the truth of any equation.

But there is another possible interpretation of the notion of class science which needs to be investigated before we can assert with confidence that scientific truths are free from the possibility of class bias. For it may not be the motives of the inquiry alone which those who speak of class bias in science may have in mind, but it may be that they have reference to factors far more difficult to detect and less easy to demonstrate. The purpose of these sketchy notes is to broach the discussion of these factors. The term "broach" is used advisedly, for it is not here intended to do any more than pose a question. If these notes only succeed in calling attention to an aspect of the question not usually considered either by those who assert or deny the possibility of class bias in science, the writer will consider himself well rewarded for his efforts, and will be quite happy to leave the final clarification of the issue to those properly qualified on account of their intimate knowledge of science in general, of their knowledge of its historical development, and of their freedom from party bias.

There are two basic presuppositions which considered in relation to one another give rise to the problem of class-bias in science. The first of these refers to the source of the categories of all discourse whatever, including the scientific. Philosophers who deny the validity of rationalistic and a prioristic deductions must assert that the categories of all discourse whatever are historical products, and have their source in human experience. The second presupposition is of idealistic parentage, but is accepted today by all those who have abandoned a mirror theory of mind, and who call attention (in Mr. Hook's words, *op. cit.*, p. 31) "to the activity of the mind in the knowing process."

If these assumption are accepted, it is difficult to see how one can deny the possibility of class-bias in science. But the question, however, whether any given body of truths accepted as verified at any given time is altogether free from class determinations or not is an empirical question, and it can not be answered therefore in any other way than by an empirical examination of the concrete case. The possibility however of class-bias is always there. And the grounds for this are general and *a priori* to this question. For if the categories of all discourse, including the scientific, are historical products, and the history of those cultures in which science has flourished is radically determined by class tensions, how can it be claimed that the categories are free from class bias?

No dogmatic and crude materialistic determinism is necessary to arrive at these conclusions. Only one more assumption needs be made explicit to furnish us with adequate grounds for our contention: And this assumption is that any given activity of any culture can never be completely independent and autonomous from the rest of the activities of that culture. Cultural schizophrenia there may be and there always is to some extent. But it can not be absolute. There are those of course who deny any autonomy whatever to intellectual and (in the eulogistic sense of the word) to cultural activities. For these men all science is necessarily class science, and the truths of capitalist society will some day be replaced by those of socialism, as capitalism has replaced the truths of feudal society. In that day a new mathematics and a new physics will be born, the nature of which we can not even glimpse today. This view is utterly false, of course, and among other reasons for the following two: It fails to take into consideration the fact that no member of a society participates in all of its activities; this is the more true the more complex the culture. Specialization therefore occurs and partial autonomy is the result. It also fails to take into account that modern Western capitalistic culture—in which science has come to its finest bloom—is to some extent continuous and homogenous with feudal culture, and socialism will be continuous with capitalism when it comes. The criteria of truth, then, which obtained in the middle ages—it can be argued on general theoretical grounds, as it could be shown on empirical evidence—is not altogether unlike the criteria of truth which obtains to day and will obtain tomorrow. Call this a dialectical development if you will, the important thing here is not to argue as if political revolutions implied utter cultural discontinuities.

Opposed to those who deny any autonomy whatever to scientific activities are those who argue as if science were utterly autonomous and free from influence by all the other activities of the culture in which it is carried on. Denial of the possibility of class-bias assumes tacitly—if not always explicitly—the notion of the utter and complete autonomy of science. But that notion is made impossible by the assumption (an assumption only for the purposes of this paper, for the proposition is demonstrable) that the tools of inquiry and the methods

of verification are historical products. The historic fact indeed is that in some cases scientific categories are not only historical in origin but even go back to a period in which science had barely achieved a rudimentary stage of development. Such is the case with the notion of causality, which is today widely recognized to have had its source in subjective experiences of pushing and pulling which all human beings undergo. The notion of causality for a long time in the history of the West—until Hume at least—led, on account of its source, to a conception of the Universe not altogether free from animism, a mode of thinking which even today has not altogether disappeared from some scientific work. Even the categories of contemporary science are not derived today, in spite of the high degree of sophistication achieved by scientific methodology, in abstraction from the total historical, and hence class, situation. If we remember our second assumption (assumption, again, for the purposes of this paper, and like the first, demonstrable), we will have to agree that the mind which creates the tools of knowledge will leave its imprint on those tools. And since that mind has come to be what it is as a result of historical factors, determined in turn by class tensions, the imprint it leaves on the tools of knowledge can be in part at least determined by class tensions.

The fact that the mind leaves its imprint on the tools of knowledge should not be taken to mean, as Kant would have it, that the mind gives its laws to nature. Nature and its ways exist independently of the mind. Nature is there and has always been there, nor does it depend on us humans for its existence. But on the other hand, what nature is from a non-human standpoint, we never know and never shall know, so long as we remain human. And if ever we should become angels it will be from an angelic standpoint that we shall know nature, nor will we then be able to transcend the fact that knowledge is always from a standpoint. Within our human standpoint, however, a large number of possible characters may be discovered in nature, and these discovered characters not only vary historically but also vary considerably at a given time and place for the various members of a given culture. The techniques and processes of observation and verification vary from age to age and from culture to culture. And within the culture at a given period the characters which are discovered by a given technique of observation also vary, in terms of the successful or inept application of the technique in question.

It is within the latter range of variation that the notions of "objectivity" and "subjectivity" can have whatever meaning we are able to give them. The validity of our results, grounded on the "objectivity" of discovered aspects of nature, and the "subjectivity" and hence scientific irrelevance of other discovered aspects of nature, are to be asserted as relative for human beings at a given cultural stage of their history and in terms of techniques of investigation acceptable at the time. When philosophers and scientists seek—as they sometimes think they do—an

objective view of the world as it really is in itself independently of any standpoint from which it is viewed, they are looking for something chimerical and meaningless, since objects neither are ever found nor can be conceived outside of relations, and as objects of knowledge they always are found in the knowledge relation. An objectivity which is not an objectivity for human beings, and more specifically within a given universe of discourse, in terms of a given technique of discovery and verification and for a specific if not always explicit purpose, is of no use to any one. Piety and loyalty to a dying tradition leads, it seems, to the assertion of the existence of unqualified objectivity, but this assertion of a totally independent objectivity, however much may the notion be a demand of some religious creeds, leaves us exactly where we were before—utterly helpless to transcend our human standpoint.

What meaning then can we give to the distinction between the objective and the subjective? Objective is a very ambiguous term for the relativist. In one sense it refers to those characters of objects which anyone descries in objects. Such characters are objective for him who perceives them. The color which the jaundiced eye sees is in this sense objective for it, because it is in the object; and my tooth ache, which is only directly felt by myself, and for which you must take my word, or which you must infer from my behaviour, is also objective, for me, since it is a character *in,* or *of,* an object, namely my tooth. But the most important meanig of objective is the social. Some statements about nature are relegated by science to the subjective sphere because they assert the existence of objects of knowledge or of traits of objects which cannot be discovered by socially controlled techniques. Such traits are of no consequence for science. But other statements, susceptible of verification by technique which can be socially shared and have been socially accepted, are said to be objective aspects of nature and are true—but of course true for the methods of discovery and the techniques of verification. Here, then, lies the meaning of the distinction between the subjective and the objective which opponents are fond of asserting must be abandoned by relativists.

But this is not the whole story, for scientific methodology and techniques of verification do not float in vacuo nor are they devised by scientists who are somehow exempt from the burden of time and place which their fellows carry. Techniques of investigation spring from a culture during a historic epoch. And they are shaped and refined not only in terms of the culture's needs and the direction of its interests—which was readily granted in the first paragraph of these notes, but which is irrelevant to the result—but they are also constructed by a culture's imaginative capacity, and from materials lying near at hand. And if these techniques are constructed for purpose of *objective* verification, they cannot be kept in an aseptic cabinet out of the reach of unwashed hands. The presuppositions and deeply shared biases of the age and class of those whose

business it is to discover them or devise them, are effective, though of course subtle, determinants of the final product. These determinants, because they are imposed on a whole culture by a dominant class are not easy to detect except in retrospect. But they may be there and we do not serve objectivity by denying that they may be. The effective control of nature requires that we know nature's ways as objectively as possible. Subjectivity interferes with control. But one of the subjective biases we have not yet entirely freed ourselves from is the belief in an utterly fantastic and meaningless objectivity, utterly impossible to achieve. Our objectivity is relative. In some fields it is easier to achieve than in others. But in all fields of inquiry in a given historical period the objectivity gained is determined by a complex of cultural factors which affect the characters and relations discovered in the objects under observation. The imaginative capacities of peoples vary in the concrete from culture to culture and are developed along different segments, and their intellectual processes and tools vary considerably. This is a fact which admits of verification by the comparative study of cultures. And this is one of the reasons why it is not only a generic human standpoint which we are not able to transcend, but why we also find difficulty in transcending our cultural standpoint. The assertions which are sometimes made regarding the existence of detectable "national" traits—more adequately termed "cultural traits"—in the concrete elaboration of the sciences, is but a corollary of these remarks.

Nor is this all yet. For the concrete methodology developed in order to deal with objective aspects of nature is used in such way that nature and methology cannot be separated in the result, since a change in method would give us a change in nature. Which from a shifted point of view is another way of asserting what was already pointed out above in a different context: we never have reality by itself. "The activity of the mind in the knowing process" is then not only *selective* as a naive realist would grant, but *creative* as he would emphatically deny, and in a very legitimate sense of the word, since the categories and method employed in research are organic parts of the result, and can not even in logic be distinctly separated from it, for not only is the result stated in their terms but they are valid only, in the concrete, for those results. To deny this would be to assert that we can know content without form. Empty forms *may* be objects of knowledge— though even here, when empty forms become objects of knowledge, a new form may be distinguished from a new content in them as objects. But un-informed matter, matter without form, that is, never can be.

At this point a warning is necessary, in view of the ease with which these remarks can be misread as a hybrid of naturalism and Kantianism. Nature is not a thing-in-itself which *appears,* phenomenally, to a knowing mind. No such meaning is intended, nor will be read into the above statements by any one who

grasps clearly the distinction between things-by-themselves, on the one hand, to which relations are utterly external, and which therefore are assumed capable of knowledge independent of the knowledge relation itself—a conception which the writer regards as nonsense—and on the other hand, nature conceived as being in-itself what it is, not apart from a knowing mind, but in relation to one. The latter is *nature as it is in itself for knowledge;* and it is a *real nature* and not a phenomenal nature which is known.

Before proceeding it should be noted that the assertion of possibility of class bias in science does not mean that in their historical development the sciences are only true for a given class and untrue for all other classes in the culture in which they were developed. All the assertion can mean is that the results of scientific investigation which are at any time accepted as true would be different had the investigations been conducted in a society in which different class relations existed.

Of course this means that scientific truth is that which at any given time is accepted as true by those who are masters of the technique through which scientific results are obtained and verified. The verification however involves reference to objective conditions—to predictions which turn out successful, and to absence of perceptible contradictions. It may therefore be that scientific truth is what a conspiracy of experts declare it to be, as Alexander somewhere has humorously pointed out. But the experts, it should not be forgotten, even if it spoils the witticism, have to obey the rules of the game, and have to follow, so to speak, the grain of nature sufficiently close, else their fellows sooner or later call them to order.

This is relativism unashamed of itself and consistently followed. The truth for any given group of men is what they take it to be, but according to rules which once set have to be obeyed. Arbitrary personal assertions do not involve truth since truth is a social matter. The rules however which govern the game are not rigid and developed once for all. They change, and gradually become more complex. Since the dawn of science in the Greek world, the techniques of verification have gradually been developed so that men have been progressively able to catch more and more objectively the traits of nature. Which is to say, the standpoint from which we have gradually come to observe nature has gradually become more and more free from irrelevant, subjective bias, has become progressively generic. Our science is better than the science of the XVIIth century because our results obey closer the demands of a method which both the XVIIth century and ourselves accept, or which the XVIIth century could be made to accept, since it is a progressive and consistent development of the method it accepted.

It should also be noted before proceeding that in the foregoing remarks no distinction has been made between a "class," "historically," and "socially" condi-

tioned science. The reason for that should not be difficult to discern. These notes seek merely to defend the possibility of class-bias in scientific work generally, and that possibility is sufficiently established once it has been granted that all categories of discourse are historically conditioned by cultural determinants in a social complex which is in turn defined at least in part by the nature of its class tensions. To what extent any given set of results have been affected by class tensions is—as above noted—an empirical question which cannot be determined except in retrospect, and by empirical analysis. This could not be asserted if science were completely autonomous; it would not need to be if science were utterly and exclusively determined by class factors.

Attention needs also be called to the full implication of the argument developed in these notes. Those who hold that the results of science are true without qualification will advance against these observations an argument long used against all relativism. Either your argument itself, they will urge, is a relative argument, in which case you cannot deny the truth of science, or it is an unconditionally true argument, in which case there are means of getting at truth which are independent of class distortion. The answer to this sophistry is not difficult: First, the objection assumes the existence of absolute truth, which is rejected by the relativist. The sciences arrive at conclusions which the techniques of verification accept or reject as true. But the acceptance or rejection is in terms of the techniques of verification, and if these techniques are not perfect, the truth accepted cannot be perfect. But how can imperfections be found out unless we know what the perfect is? The answer is that we do not know or need to know what the perfect or the true is, in order to know that we have not achieved perfection or truth in any given instance. Imperfections or errors are found in science as in daily experience through failure of results to work, through failure in prediction, through the discovery of facts which do not fit the theory, or through the discovery of unsuspected contradictions in the complex body of results which have been accepted as verified, which force a reversal of their acceptance. We have, of course, criteria of truth, but these are formal and never complete. Scientific method is a developing thing. More is known about it today than was known by Mill's contemporaries; they in turn knew more about it than was known in the XVIth or XVIIth century. Second, the remarks made in this paper apply to science (even if they had been meant much less tentatively than they are) without falling in the absolutist's dilemma, for they refer to claims made about the degree of validity of verified results. It must be granted that a statement can be more or less true. Only on such an assumption can the self-corrective progress of science have any meaning. Verified results then are true—but they may be found susceptible of a greater degree of truth, and the failure to achieve a greater degree of truth at any time may be due to the presence in the accepted result of bias traceable to class tensions, a failure which

in the long run may be detected and corrected.

The foregoing interpretation may be rejected by those who hold that scientific activity enjoys *complete* autonomy and therefore may be carried on independently of other activities in the culture in which it flourishes. That science enjoys a high degree of autonomy it would be foolish to deny. Particularly in the most exact sciences, the degree of autonomy seems to be very great. But it is never altogether complete, since scientists, compartmentalized though they may be, do not really live in total isolation from their culture, and their mental processes and the very conceptions which they use in their work cannot be insulated from their daily, ordinary, non-professional experience. A more acceptable way of stating this contention may be this: a scientist's scientific notions are never altogether free from metaphysical notions loosely in solution in his culture. And since metaphysical notions are usually an unanalyzed amalgam derived not only from science but from ordinary human experience, the possibility that the rest of his human experience may affect his scientific experience cannot be denied. And this is all one would require for the point this paper wishes to defend. So much evidence abounds for the fact that the ordinary experience of a psychologist does actually influence the direction of his activity and the content of his finished investigations, that none need be here advanced. Let us merely recall in this connection Russell's well-known witticism about German monkeys and American rats.[1] In biology, too, investigation has been affected by conceptions, particularly of a theological nature, which, when finally detected, were deemed irrelevant. The influence is more often than not surreptitious, and seldom easy to establish. Yet it is now widely recognized that the emphasis Darwin put on the factor of struggle was a reflection, in his scientific activity, of the social conditions of his own day and country. But it will be argued that this is not true of the more exact sciences. Yet, is there any question in the mind of candid readers that certain types of cosmological speculation in our day are not altogether free from subtly working biases of a moral-religious nature? And what of the religious bias patently effective in the writings of some of our contemporary physicists?

The cultural and class factors which enter into a historical epoch's or a culture's view of the world, it was noted above, can not always be detected, except in retrospect: What class biases are determining physical research today will be found out in the future, when the economic structure of society shall have changed. And these factors are less present the more exactitude and rigour any

1 "Animals studied by Americans rush about frantically, with an incredible display of bustle and pep, and at last achieve the desired result by chance. Animals observed by Germans sit still and think, and at last evolve the solution out of their inner consciousness." "Philosophy," p. 30, W. W. Norton and Co. A more serious example of the way in which cultural factors—and hence class bias—affects scientific results in psychology is to be found in the criticisms made by Malinowski of Freud: these criticisms are now, I take it, widely accepted.

given scientific discipline achieves. But historical information is not altogether lacking to confirm in the concrete our abstract remarks. Thus in the *Quest For Certainty* and elsewhere, Mr. Dewey has noted with shrewd acumen to what extent both Greek science and Newtonian physics were affected by factors which were not only extra-scientific, but were distinctly class factors. It must be readily admitted, of course, that the methodologies of the exact sciences are devised to detect and exclude such irrelevancies. First, as already noted, in that the results must be susceptible of verification by any one irrespective of color, nationality, or class allegiances, who is acquainted with the techniques of investigation; this tends to eliminate a large number of subjective irrelevancies. But this, it must be remembered, cannot be used as ground for excluding bias from the technique itself, since the bias or error sediment to which reference is here made is not that which creeps into the results through inept manipulation, but through the use of biased categories and methods of verification themselves. Were the Germans as a people endowed with some defect of vision, their spectroscopic work would all be at fault from the generic human viewpoint, but the error could easily be detected by other human beings endowed with "normal" vision. Had, however, the human race as a whole been suffering for the last fifty years from some temporary visual defect, this defect will only be detected when and if, in the future, men ever return to "normal" vision. Were this to be the case, our truth of today will be found tomorrow to have been in error. This is true not only of the phisiological tools of knowledge but of the intellectual. If the technique of cerification in any given field at any given period were to be tainted with irrelevant factors (unperceived ambiguities in the categories of inquiry, distortions to be traced finally to class domination or whatever) these will be discovered only when a change of circumstances in the field of science or in the intellectual climate force a criticism of the technique. What is meant by any one being able to verify a given result is that he can apply the accepted techniques of verification. If he quarrels with them he is ruled out until he can convince his judges of *their* error. Scientists as a fact often disregard heterodox work, work not in fashion, and all sorts of mean prejudices, not only class ones, are back of their disregard. Histories of science do not give us an account of inquiries which have been rejected because for one reason or another they were considered eccentric.

It must, of course, be admitted that science does possess a self-corrective tendency. This I take to mean not only that the facts are subject to constant verification and the measurements to progressive refinement but also that temporal local irrelevancies are depured during its progress. Thus Darwin's overemphasis on struggle was not only corrected by Kropotkin, in the interest of his moral theory, but by the very facts themselves, since continued investigation showed that the factor of struggle could not adequately account for all the data

at hand. In physics the subjective irrelevancies are no doubt easier to detect.

But though all this may be true, and indeed the writer gladly accepts it, it does not warrant the belief in "classless" science, if that science was developed in a society in which a class is at the same time said to dominate. In such a case, to assert on the one hand the classless character of science, and on the other to maintain that the categories of inquiry are historically determined, and that the mind is active in the knowledge process, seems to be the holding of two incompatibles. The issue is of radical importance for Marxists, because if they do not accept the possibility of class science they will have to revise radically their notions regarding the rôle of classes in determining the character of historic events. We may assert—if economic forces are factors determining the "superstructure"—that the most exact sciences and the others to some extent, tend towards utter autonomy from certain types of determinations, from all those, that is, which are not shared generally by all human beings. There is no denying that science *seeks* the generic human standpoint. But whether it achieves it or not at any given time cannot be maintained with adequate certitude at that time. Whether its categories and its techniques are today free from irrelevant determinations due to the fact that science is operating at a certain stage in the development of capitalism only a comparative study of our science and the science which socialism will develop could tell us with any certainty. Until then, the question must be left an open one. It is necessary to laugh out of court the notion of 'class science' as naively held. But we have no ground for asserting that science is now absolutely free from class bias. This cannot be known except in retrospect. And there are good reasons to suspect that such is never the case. And precisely because the biases of classes and periods are pervasive, they are, as has been frequently noticed of the presuppositions of an age, less easy to detect.

ELISEO VIVAS

On Marxism and Morality

If scientific Marxism be interpreted as a system of propositions describing political, economic and social relationships, and judgments of value are interpreted as commitments to the desirability of certain states of affairs, then there is no gainsaying Sidney Hook's conclusion that no propositions asserting the desirability of socialism can properly be deduced from Marxism.[1] On the other hand, Hook recognizes that in cases when the major premise in an argument is a value judgment, the conclusion may also be a judgment of value. To quote the example which he gives: ". . . if peace between nations is

1 "Marxism and Values" *Marxist Quarterly* Vol. 1 (1937) pp. 38-45.

considered to be the be-all and end-all of social life, then a demonstration of the fact that all modern wars are a result of conflict between capitalist powers in quest of higher returns on their investments, together with the absence of any plausible reason for believing that under socialism conflicts between nations will be negotiated by force of arms, would seem to necessitate a belief in the desirability of socialism. (A further factual assumption, of course, would be that there is no third alternative to capitalism and socialism.)"[2] The value judgment constituting the major premise of this argument has nothing to do with Marxism which tells us only that under certain circumstances what is desired can or cannot be achieved.

However, there is a type of connection between Marxism and morality which Sidney Hook does not touch upon in his paper although there is no reason to suppose that he would not agree with everything to be said below. Certain propositions of Marxism, although not themselves value judgments, are criticisms of concepts and institutions which embody past value judgments. In as much, then, as systems of morality are established and questions of right and wrong are decided in terms of such institutionalized value judgments and concepts, the propositions of Marxism which are critical of these institutions have an immediate significance for the moral systems which depend upon them. To be sure, in this way nothing is demonstrated concerning what is or is not desirable, but it can be shown that certain traditional reasons advanced to establish the desirability of this or that action are invalid reasons.

The propositions of Marxism I have specifically in mind are those which center about the concept of the state. This concept is an ethical concept and decisions concerning the nature of the state furnish norms and standards for particular judgments of value. Hence the rationalization of force exerted by the state has traditionally been one of the central concerns of ethical theory. And his decisions on the question of the nature of the state and the manner in which he justified the use of force by the state, has always been indicative of the political, economic and social bias (i.e. class bias) of any individual ethical theorist. Further, the wide acceptance of certain types of rationalization has always indicated ennoblement and protection of certain class interests.

The almost exclusive interest among present day ethical theorists in "theory of value" and in abstract discussions of the nature of value judgments and the consequent neglect of other traditional questions of ethical theory is, I believe, a class phenomenon. And by this I mean that as members or adherents of a class professional philosophers find the state power "friendly" and accept its manifestations as inevitable. Individuals among them may protest against the "abuse" of the state power but, in general, professional philosophers and moralists seem to

2 *Ibid* p. 39.

regard the state power as part of the natural environment and as something lying outside their concern with "higher" things. The existing state power guarantees to this group the satisfaction of certain basic wants and will protect the group from members of society whose basic wants are not satisfied and who might even break laws in order to satisfy those wants. Thus professional philosophers in their personal lives are concerned with achieving certain "higher" values and in deciding between competing values in terms of intensity of interest or pleasure and pain, etc. Value theory is important because it generalizes competing claims and rationalizes what is selected as a basis for deciding them.

I do not mean to belittle the interest in or the importance of value theory. I wish to point out merely that there are other, and perhaps more pressing, ethical questions which are being neglected. More specifically, from Plato to John Stuart Mill, the relation of the individual to the state was the most profound and important topic of ethics. Plato, confronted with the breakdown of traditional sanctions, faced the alternatives of accepting the exercise of sanctions by the state as a sheer application of force or of justifying such application of force in ethical terms. And since Plato's time, the great moral theorists have concerned themselves with this question. Not even Hobbes was willing to accept the first alternative. He sought justification for the application of force by the state in the desirability of the consequent civil order. On the other hand, Rousseau could only justify force or restaint if self-imposed. And in the idealistic theory of the state, Rousseau's doctrine is modified to the extent that the self imposing the force is the "better self" writ large. (However, even idealist philosophers sometimes admitted that the subject of the force might have difficulty in recognizing his "better self" in the agent.)

In any case, the deliberate exercise of force in human society and the promulgation of sanctions guaranteed by force have seemed to most people to create the problem of discovering some ethical and moral justification for the state power. And in the various attempts to solve this problem, propositions have been advanced describing the nature of the state (i.e. the instrument of force) and the nature of the individuals composing the state. In any period of history, certain propositions of this nature, widely believed, are the foundation of the social morality of the period. For example, in the Middle Ages, the state might be looked upon as an instrument of God's will and the tyranny of the state might be accounted for in terms of man's fall from Grace. Hence, obedience to the civil authorities becomes obedience to God's agents and civil disobedience becomes a sin against God. Even the demonstrated incapacity, cruelty or even imbecility of the civil authority must be patiently borne as due to original sin. In another period, "the natural rights of free Englishmen" might be advanced as an ethical justification for disobedience and revolt.

Bosanquet defines a state as "that entity legally exercising force." Here

"legally" does not refer merely to positive law but to "rightness," that is to say, the exercise of force by the state is morally justified whereas the exercise of force by individuals or groups not identified with the state power is morally wrong. In general, this justification is established through the usual idealistic demonstration that the state expresses the essential nature of all its members and that the exercise of force by the state is equivalent to a man's higher self assuming mastery over his lower self. Contrast this view with the Marxist manifestation of the *irreconcilability* concept of the state as an organ of class *domination* and *oppression,* creating "order" which legalizes and perpetuates this oppression. This is, perhaps, elementary for most Marxists, but the consequences for social morality rarely receive consideration in the textbooks and academic seminars devoted to moral theory.

The propositions of Marxism describing the state as an organ of class oppression are not ethical propositions or judgments of value. Hence, following Sidney Hook once more, it must be recognized that from such propositions it is impossible to deduce the desirability or lack of desirability of such oppression. But the idealist describes the state in ethical concepts, e.g. the state expresses the real (higher, more noble) will of its members. This definition of the state implies that one ought to obey the state. Now if Marxism offered an ethical interpretration of the state directly opposed to the idealist theory, e.g. that the state expresses the ignoble or base will of its members, the implication could be drawn that one ought not to obey the state. However, Marxism offers, not an alternative ethical concept, but a criticism, based on empirical observation and the study of history, of the ethical disguise of the state power. Hence, it confronts social morality, not with a set of alternative value judgments, but with a criticism of accepted value standards and norms of conduct. It does not say that one ought not obey the state. It does say that to justify obedience to the state because the state is the embodiment of the ethical or real will is sheer clap trap.

One final point must be made. Philosophers devoted to value theory may insist that morality is an affair of what is "internal" or "higher" and thus not amenable to state power. But this insistence is also a class phenomenon. It is a product of "liberalism" which seeks to restrict the influence and range of the activity of the state. Its net result is to divorce "morality" from conduct, faith from works. No one, of course, least of all a Marxist, would assert that man is a mere automaton reacting to the external pressure of the state and with no "inner" life. In the last analysis, I suppose, the question is one of degree and emphasis. But it seems to me that no moralist worthy of serious attention can afford to minimize or neglect the intimate connection between man's conduct and the sanctions and compulsions which express the power of the state.

MORTIMER TAUBE

Reviews of Books

The Sociology of Knowledge

IDEOLOGY AND UTOPIA, *by Karl Mannheim.* New York, Harcourt, Brace & Co., 1936; 386 pages; $4.00.

One of the most powerful arguments of the skeptical tradition in Western thought has been drawn from the observation that a difference in *historical* perspective often makes a difference to (1) what one sees, (2) how one sees it, and (3) how one evaluates what is seen. Since the time of Marx it has been commonly recognized that within any given historical period, especially when it is dynamically conceived, differences in *social* or *class* status likewise introduce differences in attention and activity. Veblen and Dewey, although avoiding large generalizations, have offered some brilliant illustrations of the influence of *vocation* upon world outlook, basic modes of satisfaction and standards of success, adequacy, and failure in non-vocational domains. Whether it is the historical period or class or vocation (or all three) which is stressed as the relativizing factor in thought, an obvious distinction must be recognized between those fields in which a body of scientific propositions has been built up that command the assent of all qualified investigators, and fields in which such agreement has not been secured. In the past the recognition of this distinction has usually been preliminary to one or the other of two reductions. Either it has been maintained that all knowledge is infected by a social (historical, class, vocational, etc.) bias, therefore necessarily falling short of scientific objectivity, or that *qua* knowledge none of it is so infected and therefore free from any essential subjectivity.

Professor Mannhein's book represents one of the most ambitious attempts to clarify the whole of this troubled question. He rejects both reductions but formulates no intelligible third alternative and leaves the subject logically in almost the same state as he found it. He does, however, raise all the important problems. Although the reader will find the discussion confusing, he will also find it, so to speak, to be a fruitful and suggestive confusion.

Two distinct but related problems receive attention in Mannheim's discussion. The first is the definition of ideologies and Utopias, their social contexts and consequences; the second is the influence of social processes upon the processes

of knowledge where knowledge is carefully distinguished from ideologies and Utopias.

The most original aspect of Mannheim's discussion of ideologies and Utopias is to be found in his definitions. An ideology is a set of beliefs, naturally developed by ruling groups, which interprets and rationalizes the facts of mind, nature and society in such a way as to stabilize their rule and to systematically obscure the "real condition of society." It expresses the way in which a group in power surveys the world. "The concept 'ideology' reflects the discovery . . . that ruling groups can in their thinking become so intensively interest-bound to a situation that they are simply no longer able to see certain facts which would undermine their sense of domination." (p. 36) Such a definition, it is clear, presupposes the existence of non-ideological scientific knowledge which does not obscure "the real conditions of society." Otherwise an ideology could not intelligibly be characterized as false, distorted, or obfuscating. Utopian thinking differs from ideology not so much in its nature as in its direction and class locus. "In the utopian mentality the collective unconscious, guided by wishful representation and the will to action, hides certain aspects of reality. It turns its back on everything which would shake its belief or paralyze its desire to change things." Ideologies are the conceptual constructions by which conservative groups preserve existing order; utopias are the instruments employed by revolutionary groups to transform the existing order.

Much can be said of the convenience of these definitions in classifying the pseudo-scientific doctrines which accompany the clash of interests in social life. Even so, certain difficulties are suggested by the unanalyzed notion of "a collective unconscious"—a notion whose validity is more dubious than that of the individual unconscious. These definitions also cut across the customary Marxist distinctions between utopian socialism and scientific socialism, for in Mannheim's view both are illustrations of utopian thinking. Nonetheless these are minor matters because, although Mannheim does not do so, the "collective unconscious" can be operationally interpreted to refer to the statistical distribution of unreflective behavior patterns of individuals where interests are involved; and even though on his definitions Mannheim would classify utopian and scientific socialism together, he would not deny their differences in other respects.

The real difficulty begins at the point where Mannheim recognizes that ideologies and utopias, expressing class standpoints as they do, lead to theories and discoveries about the nature of things which are held to be "true" in a scientific sense. He then shifts the question to whether these "truths" are dependent upon the class standpoint and interest which led to their search and discovery. Since class standpoints and interests change with historical periods, the question becomes one, for Mannheim, of the sociology of knowledge. Each class has its own "truth" just as each age has its own "truth." And this not only in

the fields of art and politics but in every field. Assuming now that scientific treatment is synonymous with objectivity, the problem which arises to plague Mannheim is: how is any kind of scientific knowledge possible? Mannheim gives different answers on different pages of his book and leaves the reader completely in the dark as to what he really believes.

I shall take as a basis for critical discussion one of the answers which he gives, and then show, once certain important distinctions are introduced, that a consistent answer can be given to the problems he raises which recognizes both the objectivity of science and the relativity of class points of view.

"It has become incontrovertibly clear today," writes Mannheim, "that all knowledge which is either political or which involves a world-view is inevitably partisan. The fragmentary character of all knowledge is clearly recognizable. But this implies the possibility of an integration of many mutually complementary points of view into a comprehensive whole." (p. 132) To begin with, it is not clear in what relevant sense knowledge *qua* knowledge, and *a fortiori* political knowledge, must be partisan. Knowledge as such is either true or false (probably true or probably false). The same bit of knowledge may be put to different class uses just as it may be put to different personal uses but the character of the use cannot be inferred from the nature of the knowledge. And what is meant when it is said that knowledge which "involves" a world-view is partisan? If by a world-view is intended the logical presuppositions of any piece of knowledge, then since all knowledge has some logical presuppositions all knowledge would "involve" a world-view, and the original distinction between the kinds of knowledge, recognized by Mannheim, becomes pointless. Further, what is meant here by a "world-view"? Does it consist of a set of propositions which describe the world or a set of resolutions which indicate how we are going to evaluate or act upon the world. If the first then it is a claim to be knowledge; if the second, it may be partisan but the partisanship flows from the fact of purpose, use, interest or value but not from its claim to be knowledge. When Mannheim adds "the fragmentary character of all knowledge is clearly recognizable" he makes the matter even more obscure by injecting a distinction not at all germane to the sentence which precedes it. That all knowledge is fragmentary implies either that there is always something more to be known or that the knowledge we have can be made more accurate. But what has this to do with partisanship? If true, it must be recognized by partisans of the same color to hold for whatever *they* claim to know as well as for what partisans of different colors claim to know. To proceed to talk about "the integration of many mutually complementary points of view into a comprehensive whole," where "points of view" presumably represent the partisan bias, is to make a flying leap from the position of the first sentence which makes all matter-of-fact knowledge partisan, to a new position according to which resolutions, bias, axioms of evaluation

and preference are illustrations of knowledge. Think of the many mutually complementary points of view expressed in the political scene. What can it possibly mean to say that they are "integrated"? And integrated into "a comprehensive whole"? Does this mean there are many comprehensive wholes or that there is one whole which like the Hegelian Absolute does not depend upon any point of view but presupposes them all? Mannheim leaves the problem in a muddle.

The fundamental source of Mannheim's difficulty is that he discusses "truth" in the large without specifying the type of problem or question concerning which we want the truth. When I ask: Is the medical hypothesis of a twelfth century physician truer than the hypothesis of a twentieth century physician?, I am asking a question in which "true" has not the same meaning as when I ask: Is the world-view of a medieval philosopher truer than the world view of a modern philosopher? In the first the hypothesis concerns some matter of fact capable of being partially verified or falsified by actual inquiry. In the light of the data at hand the twelfth century physician may have even been justified in asserting that his proposition was probably true. And we may grant that even though we assert to-day in relation to the much more extensive data at hand that the hypothesis in question is probably false, the physician had a scientific right to entertain it as a valid hypothesis at the time. The history of science does not establish the relativity of truth as much as the shifting probability relationships between propositions and the data in reference to which they are probable. In the second case the medieval philosopher is not asserting mere propositions of fact but expressing resolutions, preferences, or commands. Here history and social status enter constitutively into the meaning of the statements made but they are not statements concerning which we can literally say they are true or false. We can utter true (or false) propositions of the circumstances and occasions under which these statements are made but *per se* they are not truths.

Now let us grant that the twelfth century physician and medieval philosopher are one and the same person. Let us even grant that "the reason" he was led to formulate his medical hypothesis was the world view he held. Matters are not in any way altered. Only if it could be shown that the hypothesis in question was entailed by the "world-view"—that "the reason" which led him to his hypothesis was logical and not psychological or historical—would the necessary connection between scientific knowledge and the world view of which Mannheim speaks be established. And if that were so the world-view which served as the presumable premise of the hypothesis could be shown to be either a proposition of fact or a compound statement of propositions of fact and assertions of value; but only the propositions would be logically relevant to the hypothesis.

Many reasons can be offered for the validity of the distinction. Two will suffice in this connection. First, Mannheim himself recognizes it in distinguishing between the ideological and Utopian on the one hand, and the scientific on the

other, but unfortunately he does not abide by the implications of the distinction. Secondly, to deny this distinction is to be compelled to assert that all judgments of value can be reduced to judgments of fact or all judgments of fact to judgments of value—positions that are open to fatal difficulties.

One might even grant that before we inquire into the truth, before we engage in science, an antecedent judgment of the value of the truth or the value of science is made. What of it? This judgment of value determines our interests and guides our activities but it does not determine whether the outcome of these interests or activities is true. One might even grant that every proposition which asserts "this is logically true" or "this is scientifically true" presupposes, in the first case, an acceptance of certain conventional rules of syntax, in the second, certain convenient criteria of simplicity, predictability, etc. This constitutes no problem once we insist upon making questions concrete. Is it the case that you are denying my assertion "this is logically true" because you are operating with a different set of syntactical formulae? In that event either the problem of which set of syntactical formulae to use may be settled in the light of the consequences of their use, or the formulae will merely express decisions determined by our own sweet will and fancies. On the first alternative, there will presumably be agreement about the truth or falsity of the consequences: on the second, "truth" will always have an intrasystemic meaning so that the question of whether this set of language rules is truer than that becomes meaningless. Science, insofar as it attempts to describe the nature of the world, continually restricts the occasion in which free value-determined criteria of what constitutes valid scientific experience can operate.

The vagueness and generality of Mannheim's discussion is focalized in remarks like "people in different social positions think differently." (p. 246) About what do they think differently? Everything? Of course not. Everybody who thinks at all thinks the same way about many fields of science and mathematics; and where they differ social position has nothing to do with it. Do people, then, in different social positions think differently of *social* matters? All social matters? Hardly. It is quite often true that people in different social positions think similarly about social questions; and where they do not, it is not uniformly true that differences in thought can be correlated with differences in social position. If Mannheim were to say "people with different interests, when aware of them and of the fact that they conflict, are likely to think differently concerning policies and programs which involve these interests" he would be more nearly correct. Here is a proposition which is verifiable, whose truth does not depend upon any one's interest, although the promulgation of it may, and which avoids the popular error that because propositions *about* interests are true, therefore interests themselves are true or false.

SIDNEY HOOK

Mr. Hogben Against Mathematics

MATHEMATICS FOR THE MILLION, *by Lancelot Hogben.* New York, W. W. Norton & Co., 1937; 647 pages; $3.75.

Since the seventeenth century, the triumphs of mathematical physics have stimulated an increasing application of measurement in the study of nature and society. Consequently, there has been a growing tendency to cast scientific theories in forms capable of mathematical analysis, and to regard quantitative analysis and mensuration as synonymous with scientific inquiry. In recent years the tendency has been most conspicuous, because most novel, in the social sciences, so that without some knowledge of elementary mathematical concepts and procedures many contemporary discussions in economics and sociology are incomprehensible. To equip the layman with such rudimentary knowledge is the chief task of this book, a task which Mr. Hogben performs in the spirit of a reformer and liberator. "The time has come for another Reformation," he writes, "People must learn to read and write the language of measurement so that they can understand the open bible of modern science . . . to learn the language of size in self-defence, because no society is safe in the hands of its clever people." Readers with strong social sympathies will share Mr. Hogben's enthusiasm for this new Reformation, and will esteem his book as a stimulating and not inconsiderable contribution to it.

The book is, however, something more than a popular introduction to mathematics. To the exposition of the methods and content of this science the author has united his theories of the history and philosophy of mathematics. The resulting synthesis has an engaging and forceful quality despite, or perhaps because of, the fact that Mr. Hogben writes his mathematics with the dash, the swagger and sometimes the bitterness of a political pamphlet. His ardent regard for the social utility of science, and some sort of materialistic interpretation of its history pervade the doctrinal aspects of the book and impart even to the technical exposition a certain belligerent animus.

This belligerence is directed largely against those mathematicians who had pursued their science without a controlling interest in its applications to the practical needs of technology and commerce. Fortunately for the development of mathematics the number of such "intellectuals" who "played with geometry" is very large, though not large enough to prevent Mr. Hogben from neglecting their work which comprises most of modern mathematics.

This omission is a serious defect in the book for the resulting emphasis on the

technological applications of mathematics gives the reader the impression that mathematics is nothing but a collection of ingenious devices facilitating computation. There is no question of the social value of such employment of mathematics. To say that its social value consists in this alone, however, is to narrow social welfare to the dimensions of very elementary human interests. For mathematics has unquestionably great aesthetic values apart from any applications to natural science and technology and Mr. Hogben's social sympathies—instead of discrediting these values—would be better expressed in the reconstruction of society along lines which would allow an increasing number of people the leisure and opportunity to enjoy such values as are realized in pure mathematics. In his eagerness to make mathematics useful, Mr. Hogben destroys one of the most interesting uses of mathematics.

But formal mathematics need not rest its justification on aesthetic values. Hogben's own insistence on practical utility should lead to the fullest cultivation of the science unconstrained by the demands of technology, natural science or commerce. The history of mathematics abounds in instances of formal principles whoses valuable practical applications were not found until centuries after their discovery. About two hundred years elapsed between the discovery of hyperbolic functions and their first practical application. The mathematical properties of conic sections were studied for two thousand years before practical use was found for this knowledge, and when it was finally applied in natural science and technology the achievements of the purely formal studies bore immeasurably rich fruits in practice. Mr. Hogben would discourage formal mathemathics in favor of mathematics applied to practical social needs. But can we reasonably curtail pure mathematics when future social developments may bring about unsuspected practical applications of formal principles? Furthermore, should not our regard for practical utility urge us on to formal mathematical analysis in the hope that they may lead to mathematical discoveries having immediate practical use? Certainly, if we let history—rather than Mr. Hogben—guide us in this matter we must conclude that few enterprises have had such lasting social utility as the apparently "useless" investigations of pure mathematics.

Attempt may be made to offset these views by the contention that in its historical development mathematics has made most rapid advances when it sought to meet the demands of technology and commerce. Hogben does in fact make this assertion repeatedly, as for example when he holds that the key to the rich development of Alexandrian mathematics "is the fact that mathematics was once again in lively contact with the world's work."

This like so many of Hogben's historical statements, is doubtful. But apart from the question of historical accuracy the doctrine raises other, more fundamental questions, namely in what respects is the development of mathematics

dependent on the material conditions of society, and if these conditions could be controlled, how should they be modified to achieve the highest social value of mathematics?

A mathematical problem arises always within a more or less well defined system of symbols and rules of operation. While these definitions and rules may be adapted to some specific need or interest, that is to say, while they are not arbitrary, they are nevertheless conventional in that their introduction into the system is not necessary. Their inclusion in the system is the result of resolution or assumption, not of demonstration or verification. The solution of the problem is determined by these conventions and by the problem itself. In other words, the relation between a mathematical problem and its solution is always formal; it consists in the arrangement of symbols according to conventional rules. This relation is independent of the material conditions, social status, political convictions, etc. of the mathematician. In this phase therefore mathematics is not historical.

On the other hand, certain mathematical problems arise in the course of practical activities in commerce and technology and the stimulation derived from these sources may become a strong influence in directing the course of mathematical developments. But in noting this influence, Mr. Hogben seems to forget that it need not restrict mathematical researches to the practical subject matter in which they originate. It may lead to investigations of a purely formal kind, having no apparent practical applications. For example the Platonic geometry of the fourth century B. C., whose formalism Hogben untiringly denounces, had its origins in land surveying, calendar making etc.

Again, the mathematician's interest in some specific system of mathematics, or some specific problem within a given system may be determined by still other material conditions of his society. Most important among these are the social pressures which may be applied to direct his work. Economic security, social approval, or opportunities for publication may be extended only to those who devote their energies to certain kinds of problems or who employ certain prescribed methods of analysis.

We need not pause here for historical evidence to show that often the prejudices and interests of dominant social groups have led to the discouragement or repression of many enterprises in science and art. Such restraints have not always been the conscious exercise of social power. More often they resulted from the economic dependence of the scientist or artist on the satisfaction of certain demands implicit in the social structure.

These facts are commonplaces of historical materialism. That Mr. Hogben has so vividly exhibited them in the case of mathematics is one of the most valuable features of his book. These past restraints on scientific activity raise an important question concerning the policies of a socialist society. (1) Shall we

hold that the social restraints controlling science and art in the past have been of the "wrong" kind because they led to the exploitation of science and art for the sole benefit of a leisured, ruling class; and consequently, shall we seek to correct this evil by the employment of different restraints which would canalize cultural activity for the benefit of the large masses? Or, (2) shall we affirm that the highest social value of science and art can be achieved only through the greatest freedom of the scientist and artist from restraints extraneous to their subject matter? From this latter viewpoint, one of the great values of a planned, socialist, society would be that in it the pursuit of science and art may be relieved of constraints due to economic pressure on the scientist and artist. Free to grow in any direction, these enterprises would develop their fullest capacities for disclosing new vistas of thought and experience, and among these, society could reap its rich harvests of the practical applications that Mr. Hogben has so much at heart.

It appears, however, that Mr. Hogben's New Reformation brings to science not freedom, but a new orthodoxy. He has adopted the first of the alternative policies mentioned above. And not even his wide and earnest social sympathies can mitigate his utilitarianism which is so narrow as to exclude the social utility of formal mathematics. The full implications of his choice will appear only after a consideration of his grotesque distortions of both the history and the nature of mathematics.

II

Mathematics, according to Mr. Hogben, is the language of the size of things. This view involves two fundamental theories; first that mathematics is concerned with things, and second, that it is concerned with magnitude. Neither of these views are generally held by mathematicians or philosophers of mathematics. In adopting them Mr. Hogben has gained a valuable pedagogical advantage, for they greatly simplify the meaning of mathematical statements. A very large part of mathematics, however, does not fit Mr. Hogben's interpretation. These are dealt with in a manner characteristic of the entire book. Modern examples of such mathematics he ignores completely, while those of ancient history he meets with angry sneers for being what they are: non-quantitative.

These militant prejudices become more startling in the light of such authoritative views as the following:

"In former days," writes Bertrand Russell "it was supposed (and philosophers are still apt to suppose) that quantity was the fundamental notion of mathematics. But nowdays quantity is banished altogether, except from one little corner of geometry, while order more and more reigns supreme. The investigation of different kinds of series and their relations is now a very large part of mathe-

matics, and it has been found that this investigation can be conducted without any reference to quantity, and for the most part, without any reference to number."

Many mathematicians of ancient Greece pursued with brilliant success this mathematics of order and relation. Being partial to the science of mensuration, Hogben decries their work as a historical scandal and can see in it nothing but the evils of Greek intellectualism taking "shelter in an abstract perfection, which banished measurement from geometry." In the same vein, he regards Zeno's paradoxes as exhibiting merely the decadence of the Greek intellectuals, and their tendency to think up "funny little riddles of that sort." Not only does Mr. Hogben falsify the historical importance of Zeno's paradox, but his own swaggering pretense at its solution (Page 89) betrays a complete failure to grasp the underlying problems of the infinite and the continuum.

It was these and similar problems that led to the radical discoveries of Weierstrass and Cantor. Even a superficial acquaintance with their work would have meant the abandonment of Mr. Hogben's specious notions of mathematics. Measurement has even less place in the theory of groups and the continuum than it had in the geometry of Euclid. Would Mr. Hogben claim that this is a defect in the work of modern mathematicians? And would he say that this omission of measurement from mathematics is in modern times—as he claims it was in the ancient—the yearning of an ornamental culture for spiritual perfection?

To the doctrine that measurement is the subject matter of mathematics, Mr. Hogben joins—with characteristic dogmatism—his belief that mathematics is an empirical science. He makes no distinction between the material, referential meaning of a mathematical sentence, and the formal, strictly mathematical relations into which it enters. This systematic ambiguity screens his inconsistency in retaining the laws of formal mathematics while asserting their empirical character. Once this screen is removed, it becomes clear that if mathematical objects are—as Hogben holds—objects of perception, mathematical principles would be subject to important limitations. Many geometrical propositions, for example, would have to be significantly altered, while their validity and generality would be circumscribed by the limits of experimental techniques.

It is this uncritical empiricism,—whose embarrassing consequences are not even hinted at by Mr. Hogben—which leads him to say that some of the alleged defects of Greek mathematics derive from the fact that Greek geometry "left out time," and that the "new geometry of the Reformation . . . put time into geometry." In so far as this refers to the geometry of Descartes it should be observed that Descartes' work is not at all concerned with time or its measurement. And in so far as the concept of motion is employed by him in the generation of curves, Descartes himself says in Book II of his *Geometry* that his work does not involve—in this respect—any radical innovation over Greek mathematics.

Mr. Hogben's empiricism may have had some justification at the time when Newton wrote in the preface to his *Principles* that "geometry" is founded in mechanical practice and is nothing but that part of universal mechanics which accurately proposes and demonstrates the art of measuring." But since that time geometry has been shown to be not a study of physical space and motion, but of multidimensional orders. This conception of geometry is independent of the ideas of quantity, and is as little related to time as it is to the class struggle, both of which Mr. Hogben seems anxious to foist upon mathematics.

III

The historical accompaniments with which Mr. Hogben enlivens and sometimes illuminates his exposition of mathematics are marked by melodramatic crises and sharp, simplified contrasts. The hero of this melodrama is the practical minded mathematician with his mathematical feet firmly planted on the solid ground of technology, while its villain is the mathematician of the leisure class whose decadent indifference to the practical arts lift him into the thin ether of "fruitless" abstraction and formal speculations. Throughout, Mr. Hogben exhibits a simple, unfaltering faith in the superior intellectual power of the social minded scientists, and in the naturally scientific, progressive temper of the "plain man." Note for example these two passages appearing on the same page of his book:

"Fruitful intellectual activity draws it strength from the common knowledge which all of us share."

"History shows that superstitions are not manufactured by the plain man. They are invented by neurotic intellectuals with too little to do."

The extremes to which Hogben carries his esteem for "practical" mathematics may be illustrated by his high praise of the applied mathematics of the merchant and engineer, Thales, in contrast to his denigration of the formal mathematics of Plato and his school who, Hogben says, regarded "geometry as a useless and therefore exalted ornament of leisure." Thales' attainments certainly merit his fame, but it is absurd to elevate them above the great progress mathematics made through the work of the Platonic formalists. Indeed, there is reason to believe that Thales knew no general theorems and that his famous measurements were performed according to empirical rules he learned form the Egyptians and Babylonians without understanding the geometrical principles implied by these measurements.

Mr. Hogben's inordinate praise for mathematicians with a practical turn of mind is equaled only by his contempt for those "Greek intellectuals" of Plato's time who, unconcerned with physical measurements, systematically excluded mensuration from geometry. Typical of the intellectual level of Hogben's

discussion of Platonic geometry of the fifth and fourth century B. C. is the following:

"Geometry was an aid to spiritual perfection. We are not expected to attain spiritual perfection and enjoy ourselves at the same time. So it was natural for those who held this belief to make geometry as difficult and unpalatable as generations of schoolchildren have found it. Geometry was the highest exercise of cultivated leisure. The fun of the game lay in making the rules more complicated. Draughts and auction bridge were too tame for the unemployed intellectuals with whom Platonism found favor. They wanted chess and contract. Men who made mechanical devices for drawing new sorts of curves, like the early Athenian Archytas, found no favor, and a path to new discovery was blocked."

On the whole this passage is beneath comment. It may, however, be noted that Archytas, far from finding no favor, was a leader of the Pythagorean school to whose denunciation Hogben devotes considerable space. He counted Plato among his warmest friends and admirers. As to his "new sorts of curves" it is worth observing that at least one of these (the only one concerning which we have definite knowledge) arose out of Archytas' attempt to solve the kind of intellectual puzzle which Hogben tirelessly ridicules, i.e. finding the side of a cube whose volume is twice that of a given cube, *without the aid of measurement.* Mr. Hogben would also be scandalized to learn that among the mechanical devices authoritatively attributed to him there is nothing more practical than a mechanical dove and a rattle for children. He did write a book on mathematical mechanics but he was probably as careful to distinguish his mechanics from his geometry as his contemporaries were to distinguish the art of calculation from the theory of numbers.

It is such distinctions and the Platonic preference for the formal science that Mr. Hogben finds irksome. In his denunciation of the Greek formalists he lets himself be guided by a myopic materialism which leads him not only to neglect what is today the larger part of mathematics, i.e. the theory of numbers and of multidimensional orders, but also to ignore important contributions of these Greeks to what Hogben would regard as socially useful, practical mathematics. For example, although he frequently discusses astronomical theories, the author makes no mention of Heraclides of Pontus, who in the fourth century B. C. advanced a theory of the rotation of the earth around its axis, and of the revolution of Venus and Mercury around the sun. His theories later earned the praise of Copernicus. In view of Mr. Hogben's vilification of the Platonic mathematics, it is significant to recall that Heraclides was a pupil of Plato and that his astronomical theories were formulated in response to Plato's problem: "what are the uniform and ordered movements by the assumption of which the apparent movements of the planets can be accounted for." Lack of space prevents the

enumeration of all those Platonic mathematicians and astronomers whose works vitiate Mr. Hogben's superficial generalizations. Among these one cannot forego mentioning Eudoxus for whose great work on irrational numbers Hogben has nothing but contempt, and who developed the method of exhaustion, later used so effectively by Archimedes.

In keeping with these historical observations of our author, are his spurious associations of materialism with progress in mathematics. For example, he tells his readers that "Omar Khayyam who discovered the Binomial Theorem was a sturdy materialist," although he makes no attempt to show what Omar's materialism had to do with the binomial theorem. Similarly he refers to the Alexandrian mathematicians—whom he greatly admires—as materialists, though there is no reason to believe that any of them professed such philosophy.

There is no need to multiply these characteristic instances of Mr. Hogben's method. He hews his history through a forest of embarrassing facts. And in his raw zeal for the "practical" he makes angry attempts to turn mathematics into technology, physics or some other science. Perhaps he does not like mathematics, or perhaps he does not quite understand it. In any case his Procrustean antics in writing its history are too transparent to be taken seriously even by himself.

WILLIAM GRUEN

The Patrons of Revolutionary Art

PORTRAIT OF MEXICO, *by Diego Rivera and Bertram D. Wolfe.* New York, Covici-Friede, 1937; 211pp. and 249 illustrations; $4.75.

THE COLLABORATION of Wolfe and Rivera in this excellent book raises a critical question. Here are two portraits of Mexico inspired by a common revolutionary viewpoint, the one a written account of its history, society and culture, the other a series of images representing the very same subjects. Now these images are themselves a powerful manifestation of Mexican culture and therefore properly a subject for Wolfe's portrait. If his analysis of Mexican history is correct, we should be able to confirm it in these paintings; they should exhibit the qualities and tendencies that Wolfe considers typical in the originating culture. If they do not, we will have to conclude either that Wolfe's analysis is not sufficiently precise or that Mexican art in several significant respects does not correspond to the pattern of Mexican social and political life. Unfortunately, in reviewing the whole of Mexican history and including even the popular arts, Wolfe has nothing to say of the radical cultural movement of the 20s of which the paintings are a part, or of the effect of these avowedly propagandist works

on popular taste and thinking. It is, in other words, a portrait of Mexico which neglects the fact that the Mexican is also a revolutionary artist. But just as there is no place for Rivera in Wolfe's picture, the crucial judgment that Wolfe delivers on the official socialism of the Mexican state and its revolutionary pretensions is hardly explicit in Rivera's murals and moreover makes the existence of the latter an historical mystery.

This fact is all the more remarkable when we consider how much that is recounted by Wolfe appears independently in the paintings. Unlike the histories, now coming into fashion, in which a modern interpretation of the past is embellished by examples of the art of the period, the writing and the pictures here are thoroughly contemporary and united by common living perceptions. The murals produce a powerful impression of the density of historical life, the struggles, heroes, festivals, labor and slogans of a whole people. No other painter of our time has been so prolific and inexhaustibly curious about life and history. With all its limitations, Rivera's art is the nearest to a modern epic painting.

Beside the pictures, Wolfe's story is agreeably clear and unpictorial. He does not try to create a parallel spectacle for the reader, but everything he treats, and no matter how briefly, whether the landscape, the primitive cultures, the arts or the historic conflicts, is focussed on the present in its actual mobility and tensions. The Mexican past is analyzed in order to explain the vast disparities in Mexican culture and economy to-day and the resulting political relations. His account of the insurgent movements and their heroic leaders during the last hundred years is especially lucid and critical. He observes already in the nineteenth century the peculiar obstacles of the Mexican people to-day,—the essentially local, peasant character of the programs and movements, the immaturity of the native bourgeoisie in the period of struggle against feudal powers, and the appropriation of revolutionary slogans by the rulers of Mexico to forestall a decisive change. During the world crisis, when foreign fields of investment were closed, the Mexican bourgeoisie emerged as the junior partner of foreign, especially American, imperialism, and now maintains itself, in alliance with the latter, by a domestic policy of minor agrarian reforms, anti-clericalism and pseudo-socialist slogans. The seeming radicalism of the government flows from these conditions; it intervenes directly in the labor movement and tries to shape its policies. Even the communist party of Mexico supports Cardenas as a genuine liberal against the weaker reactionary forces. It is this necessity of placating the workers and maintaining the support of the imperialists which explains the socialist and revolutionary *language* of the government.

"What is the Socialism of our Revolution?" asks Nicefero Guerrero, the spokesman for the Senate at the celebration of the Madero revolt of 1910 on November 20, 1936. "We must say it frankly, the Socialism of our Revolution can not be anything but Marxian Socialism. . . . For many, to speak of Marx-

ism is to invoke the disappearance of private property . . . but that is the phantasma of the uninformed. . . . Neither the Revolution nor the Government is trying to implant Communism in Mexico. The Revolution includes in its program restraint, not abolition, of private property . . ." (p. 206).

The Marxian Socialism of the candid Guerrero includes, however, the murals of Rivera and other revolutionary painters, and this fact alone at once challenges the current ideas about the nature and value of revolutionary art. If Mr. Wolfe is correct in attributing the official socialism of the regime to a counter-revolutionary intention, what shall we say of the mural paintings reproduced in this book, nearly all of them on walls of public buildings and created under the patronage of this regime? Although produced in a semi-colonial country, with an extremely weak and politically undeveloped proletariat, these paintings were regarded as the first and outstanding monuments of a revolutionary art in bourgeois society; as such they were a living sign to young painters in America that a revolutionary and even proletarian painting of classic dimensions was possible today outside of Russia. But they owed their existence to the radical pretensions of a plundering military regime and indirectly helped to preserve the existing state.

Those who accuse Rivera of abandoning his original position to serve the pseudo-socialism of the government cannot logically exempt from this charge his earlier, supposedly more authentic, revolutionary murals, which were created under similar patronage. (They are now involved in the contradiction of denouncing Rivera for having indirectly supported a regime which they themselves are so anxious to embrace directly in a political and cultural popular front.) When Rivera undertook bourgeois commissions in the United States, he was charged with a betrayal of his public revolutionary art; yet it was never asked how such an art was possible in a semi-colonial country dominated by foreign imperialism. If the requirements of American capitalism, in the face of the crisis, could promote an interest in paintings glorifying machines, productive labor and the resources of the country, the insurgence of the Mexican peasants and their supporters could wring from their masters the official space for Rivera's and Orozco's art. But in the United States as in Mexico there was an apparent discrepancy between the work of the Mexican artists and the ideas of their patrons. The latter in California, Detroit, New York and Hanover have included Republicans; yet the murals they commanded have been far more radical in symbolism than the works executed by radical American painters for the projects of the New Deal. It is not a question here whether certain works of Rivera are genuinely revolutionary and (therefore) artistically good and others are pseudo-revolutionary and (therefore) artistically bad, but rather what are the criteria of the revolutionary or even liberal character of a work of art or of its admittedly political content? Are these criteria to be found in the intentions of the artist or in the interests of the group which pays for the work? In the work

itself, in what is represented or conveyed, or in the momentary effects on those to whom the work is addressed, effects which largely depend on changing circumstances? And can these effects be prejudged from the doctrines and actions presented imaginatively in such art? (There are also the criteria of revolutionary sensibility and "nourishment" which Rivera has mysteriously applied to the "revolutionary" Cézanne: "even if he painted a loaf of bread there was in it the reflection of the character of the revolutionary artist," he wrote in 1933.) It is conceivable that an art which avows a socialist doctrine may support attitudes dangerous to the working class. It may idealize violence, leadership, or national tradition in a manner congenial to fascism; it may lull its audience with reassuring images of the expected change, creating an agreeable atmosphere of revolutionary security and converting the issues of action, the stubborn obstacles and shortcomings, into ordered images of triumph. The sculptures of the Last Judgment on the portals of the cathedrals often show bishops and kings in hell, and offer to the worshippers discontented with the feudal hierarchy the guarantee that the Church has listened to their charges and is on their side. The ease with which slogans of socialism are appropriated by the fascists indicates how great is the gulf between slogans and action, between general assertions and effective tactics. And in so far as the revolutionary work of art projects slogans, phrases and their counterpart images, in so far as it forms a spectacle rather than determines an action, its effect in stirring the imagination may be manipulated in contrary ways. "The one thing that can ruin everything revolutionary," said Lenin in April 1917, "is the phrase—this flattery of the revolutionary people." On the other hand, works without political intention have by their honesty and vigor excited men to a serious questioning of themselves and their loyalties; they have destroyed the faith in feudal or bourgeois values and helped to create the moral courage necessary for revolutionary action and will. The literature of the eighteenth century which formed the sentiments of the French revolutionaries was generally, if not always, without overt appeals to overthrow the feudal state and rarely dealt with the precise issues of class antagonism.

The fact that a work of art has a politically radical content therefore does not assure its revolutionary value. Nor does a non-political content necessarily imply its irrelevance to revolutionary action. It is in the larger context of the social movement and its positive historical results that the practical significance of partisan art has to be judged.

Are the revolutionary Mexican paintings—the most vital and imposing art produced on this continent in the twentieth century, works pervaded by a sincere hatred of oppression and by sympathy with the masses—to be interpreted then as politically reactionary? This would follow from a simple extension of Wolfe's analysis of modern Mexican history; so long as the masses are insurgent but politically unclear or misguided, their progressive demands are represented by the

government in minor reforms, mural paintings and "socialist education." But to resolve these questions of the political character of Mexican art, it would be necessary to analyze the conditions of its creation, its effect on popular sentiment, its place in the whole cultural and social movement of the time. Even the artistic character of Rivera's work would have to be judged more precisely; for the values loosely attributed to his paintings, the misconception of Rivera as a revolutionary primitive comparable to the greatest masters of the past, and the mistaken assimilation of his work to indigenous traditions, undoubtedly affected the patronage and reception of his art. And the importance of the new political content in solving the problems of Rivera as an artist, who had turned like so many others after the war from abstract forms to an objective or neo-classical, traditional, monumental style (the Italian Severini is a Catholic counterpart), this, too, must be considered. The fact that painting could become so important in a backward country during a period of change and that it could draw upon a political movement for its main themes and impetus are as significant of the historical peculiarity of Mexico as other social and cultural facts on which Wolfe dwells at length. But it is just this aspect of Mexican history that Wolfe has omitted in the book, although he has several times referred to the paintings as expressing perfectly a realistic conception of Mexican life corresponding to his own. An analysis of the so-called Mexican renaissance would have increased the value of the book, if only by imposing on the author the necessity of a sharper formulation of his judgment of Mexican pseudo-socialist politics. And it would have furnished the means for clearing the atmosphere of the vague ideas, the charges and counter-charges which now obscure the paintings themselves.

MEYER SCHAPIRO

DISCUSSION

MEYER SCHPIRO'S review raises a number of interesting questions, some of which are so broad and fundamental that they would take much more space to answer than they do to ask.

A case in point is the query as to the causes and nature of the cultural and artistic movement in modern Mexico. It is my belief that the revolutionary art movement in Mexico, and specifically its greatest expression, the work of Diego Rivera, is more a reflex of the Russian Revolution than it is directly of the Mexican. In fact, the best expression in art that the Russian revolution has found is precisely in the work of this Mexican artist working in a backward land where the industrial proletariat has not yet achieved independent class organization. For analogies one might remember that the French revolution and the British industrial revolution found their best expression in philosophy, not in England

or France, but in the backward Germany of Hegel and Marx.

The main rôle of the Mexican revolution, esentially bourgeois-agrarian, was to create a revolutionary mood and thus make the "receptor," Rivera, more sensitive to the impact of the most advanced revolutionary movement of his day. This remark is only a hint, not an analysis, but it will indicate to Schapiro the answer to his question as to why I did not tackle, in *Portrait of Mexico*, the problem of the Mexican cultural movement and its roots. This, like the vexed and interesting problems of the criteria of revolutionary art, the effect of art upon the spectator and the relations of artist and private and state patron, belong more properly in a work on Rivera than in a work on Mexico: they are primarily problems of art criticism and only incidentally of social criticism.

But it is not to answer Schapiro's friendly queries as to my text that I am writing this comment, but to take advantage of certain opportunities his article affords for dispelling some current and widely and persistently circulated misconceptions as to the nature of the artist's work and relations to the Mexican government.

"The crucial judgment that Wolfe delivers on the official socialism of the Mexican state," he writes, "is hardly explicit in Rivera's murals." I believe that a closer examination of the "content" and "spirit" of the plates included in *Portrait of Mexico* will reveal to Schapiro that his observation is not justified. The canvases show a constant preoccupation with the burden of backwardness and shadow of continued poverty hanging over present-day Mexico. It is true that this does not necessarily imply that the regime is responsible for these conditions, but it does show that after seventeen years of "Laborite" and "Socialist" regimes Mexico is far from the paradise its apologists would make of it. But the murals, because of their large scope and intention for the masses as "public," are vastly more direct and explicit. It is not Schapiro's fault that the murals are not dated—a thing difficult to do with works of that magnitude and so frequently interrupted—but they are arranged as a whole in the book in the order of their initiation, if not always in the order in which certain panels were completed. If that order is followed they show on the whole a progressively growing consciousness on the artist's part of the limitations of an incompleted bourgeois-agrarian revolution, a progressively sharper critique of the prevailing regime, and a steadily more explicit statement of the need of a proletarian and socialist revolution. Moreover, there is an instructive parallel between the cooling process of the Mexican revolution's settling more and more into the mold of a native bourgeois regime and the growing revolutionary critical explicitness of the artist's representations. Here too there is no desire to imply any neglect on the reviewer's part because my text, thanks to its brevity, could devote only one chapter to "Mexico Today" and hence had to concentrate on end results—perhaps too much so—rather than on the process by which they were reached.

The earliest murals in the ground floor of the Secretariat of Education, which unscrupulous opponents have professed to find the "most revolutionary," are little more than populistic glorifications of the worker and peasant at their labors and in fraternal embrace. The subtle influence of such work in developing self-confidence and class consciousness I will not go into here, for I am concerned only with Schapiro's remark about "explicitness" of criticism. Already the Chapingo murals reveal that Rivera feels rather than knows that all is not well with the Mexican revolution. The "Distribution of the Land" panel implied approval, as was natural and proper, of the land distribution developments, but the picture of "good government" of the future is guarded by worker, peasant and soldier, united in arms, while the "bad government" (scenes of strikebreaking, shooting up of villages, etc.) is guarded and presided over by recognizable types of the current Mexican ruling class. The chapel murals, because of the nature of the architecture, impelled the painter to undertake a more symbolic treatment of the theme of revolution, but there are pointed if allegorical references to the peasant martyrs whose blood fertilizes the revolution and the worker agitators who will lead the peasants onward to proletarian revolution.

Returning about this time to the third floor of the Secretariat of Education Rivera chose as his theme a communist "Ballad of the Proletarian Revolution." Here for the first time American capital is pilloried (Rockefeller, Morgan); and, with these, recognizable types of the Mexican bourgeoisie. The panels urge the need of proletarian revolution, show barricades, the seizure of factories as well as land, and the establishment of soviets.

But the most daring and most explicit of Rivera's murals is the third wall of the National Palace done after his expulsion from the Communist Party as a "renegade" and after his first return from the United States in the early 1930's.

Its theme is "Mexico Today and Tomorrow." From it we chose the "Shooting of the Agraristas" which on Rivera's insistence with our publisher was used as dust jacket to accompany the title of our book. This wall contains representations of the hanging of strikers and agraristas, explicitly labelled in the painting (plate 234), the ridiculing of the fake "national socialism" of Mexico (plate 235), the real native ruling class, more than recognizable types, recognizable portraits (plates 232, 236), and an indication of the necessity of proletarian revolution with Marx pointing the way to a new society. Even on the central wall painted years earlier Rivera had dared to put over the still not unfriendly portraits of Obregon and Calles a figure of a worker addressing well-known peasant martyrs, two of them murdered by the Calles regime, and pointing over the heads of Calles and Obregon to the other wall where Karl Marx stands.

After this Rivera received no more walls in Mexico as his growing estrangement from the government developed their boycott against him. But even his one mural opportunity from private sources, the Hotel Reforma panels (1936),

ended in a blowup, because in this ballroom allegorical masquerade he painted under the guise of animal masqueraders a devastating critique of present-day Mexico. Here the relations of the labor movement to government subsidy are satirized in the pig, recognizably resembling Morones (plate 246), and the bootlicking jackass grasping after bones (the slang term for political graft in Mexico) who bears an unmistakable likeness to Lombardo Toledano. I have had occasion to verify myself the ability of every worker who passed through the hall to recognize these as well as the portraits of other leaders of Mexican life. Among them is "General Pork Barrel" (plate 248), clearly aimed at the then Minister of Agriculture, General Cedillo. And there are references to the rôle of foreign capital, the "Gold Shirts," the restoration of the church, the menace of fascism. Only a deeply corrupted cynicism could invent the idea peddled about here in certain circles that Pani removed the murals to get publicity for himself and his hotel though the paintings were really meaningless and innocent. Pani's associates in the ruling of Mexico are all too identifiable in this festive, satirical work.

"If Wolfe is correct in attributing the official socialism of the regime to a counter-revolutionary intention," writes Schapiro, "what shall we say of the mural paintings represented in this book, nearly all of them on walls of public buildings and created under the patronage of this regime?"

I will pass over the question as to who was using whom when Rivera painted a revolutionary critique of the Mexican government upon governmental walls or of American capitalism upon walls at the disposal of John D. Rockefeller, Jr. I am rather interested in pointing out that both painter and regime are, in Schapiro's criticism, regarded as fixed, whereas both have been changing entities. To be sure it implies no criticism of the reviewer who apparently has derived his social knowledge of Mexico from my inadequate text which could devote only one chapter to "Mexico Today" and therefore had to limit itself to description of the set-up rather than the process; nor has the biography of Rivera yet been treated by any one to show that he was not born a proletarian revolutionist and only gradually became one.

The relationship between regime and painter, somewhat simplified as to zigzags for the sake of brevity, is a relationship between two changing entities developing in contrary directions. In 1921 the regime had not yet clarified itself to Rivera, not even fully to its leaders, and the painter had not yet joined the Communist Party. Those were the early days when, to quote Ernestine Evans, "the Obregon government was still more a revolution and less a government holding power." Diaz had given the populace boulevards and palaces; Obregon gave them schools and communal buildings. Vasconcelos happened to be in the ministry that spent during those years more on schools than the war ministry was spending on the army. Being an art lover he conceived the idea of covering

the walls with murals. He was none too pleased with Rivera's subject matter, but allowed him freedom. With the election of Calles prominent members of the regime boasted that they were going to wipe off the "ugly monkeys of Diego Rivera," but by then the art critics and American tourists had gotten excited about them and the plan fell through. As the regime hardened into a mold Rivera's illusions diminished, his murals became more critical. Today in the days of maximal governmental demagogy his explosive murals have become unwelcome altogether. None will be removed, but at present he is denied access to governmental walls. By this I do not mean to imply that he is unwilling to paint on walls controlled by the present government. He will, I feel, accept walls from the State, the Church, Rockefeller, or the Devil, provided that through them he can reach the masses with the freedom to express himself according to his own social and esthetic views.

BERTRAM D. WOLFE

Philosophy and Physics

THE PHILOSOPHY OF PHYSICS, *by Max Planck*. New York, W. W. Norton, 1936; 128 pages; $2.00. SCIENCE AND THE HUMAN TEMPERAMENT, *by Erwin Schroedinger*. New York, W. W. Norton; 192 pages; $2.50.

THESE two books concern themselves with the philosophical implications of recent developments in physics rather than with the empirical facts themselves. For the most part they discuss the problem of determinism, of causality, an especially moot question among scientists today. Is causality something objectively inherent in the events of the external universe, independent of the "ordering" faculty of men, or is it a mere style subjectively imposed upon external events the better to order them for purposes of more economic arrangement and analysis? Are events determined or does pure chance reign at the heart of the universe? These are the central age-old problems to which both authors pay their respects. The fact that such outstanding voices in contemporary physics can come to practically opposite conclusions is sharply indicative of the transitional state in which physics finds itself in clarifying the basic theoretical (philosophical) postulates underlying its empirical investigations.

Differences in regard to causality are, of course, nothing new in the history of science as well as philosophy. The conflict, however, has become especially pointed among physicists ever since the promulgation of the so-called theory of indeterminacy by Werner Heisenberg in 1927. On the basis of his investigations in the sub-atomic world he announced as a leading principle that it is impossible to determine simultaneously the exact position and velocity of a moving particle.

That is, the more accurately we determine the exact position in space of a particle the less accurately can we determine its velocity at that identical moment, and *vice versa*. On the basis of the technical possibilities of measurement open to scientists today the difficulty of simultaneously determining both the exact position and velocity of a particle must be accepted as an empirical fact. But the far-reaching conclusions of a philosophical kind regarding the nature and structure of the universe that have been drawn therefrom represent something else entirely.

The promulgation of the indeterminacy principle became the point of departure for an attack against the materialist foundations of science. Certain scientists, who exhibited more of reckless imagination than sober scientific judgment, trumpeted the death of causality and fell back upon philosophical idealism to support their claims. The world was a shadow, determination was a myth, and chance reigned at the heart of the universe. The ghost of old Bishop Berkeley stood behind these new offerings of an outworn idealism which in turn served to buttress every specious variety of religious and mystical obscurantism. The effusions of the Eddingtons, the Jeans, the Comptons, the Bridgmans, the Alexis Carrels are classic in this direction.

To judge by the testimony of this book Schroedinger belongs in this camp. His position is but another variant on the now generally recognized pattern of the indeterminists. Through the empiricists, back to Hume, on causality—causality is a mere subjective fiction: ("it is not a necessary feature of our thought, but only a convenient habit . . . "); determinism is a myth ("undetermined chance is primary and is not further explicable"); lawlessness reigns (" . . . the single molecule is absolutely haphazard"); "disorder in nature is steadily on the increase." It is a mad hatter's world!

With Planck, the discoverer of the quantum theory, we move in a different atmosphere. His book—containing nothing essentially new not already indicated in his two previous books, *The Universe in the Light of Modern Physics* and *Where Is Science Going*—is a defense of the basic orderliness of the universe, a defense of the materialist foundations of science:

"Theoretical physics is based upon the assumption that there exist real events not depending upon our senses. This assumption must in all circumstances be maintained. . . . Physics deals with these actual events and its object is to discover the laws which these events obey."

Causality is objectively inherent in the external events of a universe independent of man:

" . . . causality is something fundamental . . . it is ultimately independent of our senses and of our intelligence and is deeply rooted in the world of reality. . . . For surely it will be admitted that even if the earth with all its inhabitants were to perish, the cosmic events would still continue to obey their causal laws

even though no human being were alive to test the meaning and justification of such a claim."

Planck's discussion of the indeterminacy theory is illuminating. The claim that causality has been overthrown he rejects as an unwarranted deduction from the indeterminacy theory. In criticising the latter he warns against confusing the categories "undetermined" and "unmeasurable." As Planck and others have noted, the difficulty of simultaneously determining accurately both the position and velocity of a particle flows directly out of the nature of the experiment involved. We can determine the position of an electron only if we can see it, and in order to see it we must illuminate it, *i.e.* we must allow light to fall on it. The rays of light falling upon it hit the electron and thus change its velocity in a way which it is almost impossible to calculate. The more accurately we desire to determine the position of the electron the shorter must be the light waves employed to illuminate it, the stronger will be the impact and the greater the inaccuracy with which the velocity is determined. So that, according to Planck, the measuring instrument used (light waves) affects the thing to be measured (moving electron) in such a way as to make an exact simultaneous measurement of position and velocity impossible. It is clear, however, that we are not dealing with a situation in which the behavior of the electron is a haphazard one. In fact the very difficulty of tracing the course of the electron is itself an illustration of the cause and effect relationship. As Planck says:

"The physical system under consideration forms a totality subject to law if the process of measuring is treated as forming part of it."

Still more pertinent, perhaps, to the matter at hand is the fact which many investigators have noted, *viz*: that the very errors upon which the indeterminacy theory rests its case, themselves exhibit a deterministic base. The errors either in position or velocity are not independent of each other, but on the contrary, are mutually interrelated. The smaller the error in position, the greater the error in velocity and *vice-versa*. The product of the errors is always the same and equal to Planck's constant "h." This fact alone is sufficient refutation of the claim of complete lawlessness in the electron which the indeterminists posit. As Planck correctly says, " . . . the existence of an objective limit like Planck's quantum is a sure indication that a certain novel law is at work. . . . "

But exactly and concretely how to characterize this "novel law" is the problem that scientists face in putting their theoretical fences in order. The indeterminists, on the one hand, have discarded strictly causal laws. In their place they have substituted statistical laws as the only valid foundation for physical law. This is predicated on the basis that individual particles are undetermined, are completely capricious, and therefore average effects of many of these particles represent the only possibility of accounting for observed regularity of behavior, *i.e.* law. The indeterminists, of course, seek further to buttress their position by

utilizing the seemingly insoluble contradictions in the present state of physics, *viz.* that between the corpuscular and wave theories of light for instance.

Planck, on the other hand, and with him Einstein and others have expressed themselves as dissatisfied with the "reign" of statistical law and especially with the anti-deterministic conclusions drawn therefrom by the indeterminists. They stress the transitional character of the limits of our present state of knowledge. The inadequate and provisional character of quantum mechanics is admitted by physicists since it cannot explain certain centradictions between the corpuscular and wave theories of light in diffraction phenomena. Einstein has expressed himself thoroughly dissatisfied with the situation which calls for a more all-embracing conception, in which " . . . this theoretical base (*i.e.* the statistical outlook) will be replaced later on by a more deterministic one."

The implication that science cannot forsake the bedrock of a deterministic outlook without committing suicide is wholly sound. However, there is implied in Einstein's remarks a certain negative attitude toward statistical laws as something which must be overcome.

The unwarranted deductions of the indeterminists regarding causality cannot be effectively fought, however, by denying the serviceability of statistical laws, or by trying to "overcome" them in searching for some miraculous dispensation which would enable us to successfully "chase" every individual electron to its lair. This leads to an impasse.

The mechanical determinism of the isolated object as exemplified in classical Newtonian physics is simply not applicable to the phenomena of the sub-atomic world. That is an advance in knowledge and nothing to get excited about. It simply emphasizes the necessity of a flexible extension and concretization of the general concept of causality to different levels of investigation. The statistical character of investigation is a legitimate and inevitable technique of analysis evolved specifically to meet the problems posed by just such a different level of investigation, *viz.,* that of wholes, groups, systems (gases, for instance). Take the state of a gas as a whole. We have myriads of individual particles, each interacting with the others. Estimates of the properties of the state of the gas as a whole (temperature, pressure, etc.) are gotten through statistical investigation and not through a strictly causal tracing of the movement of each individual particle. Indeed, tracing the path of each individual particle, even if that were possible, would not help us, for the properties of the whole have a specific character which cannot be deduced from a sum of the properties of the individual parts. It cannot be doubted, however, that the movement of each individual particle, in functional relation to other particles, is not a haphazard one but one conditioned by the intricate relationship existing between all.

The uniformity of behavior of the whole, reflecting the invariant functional relationship of the parts in that whole testifies to a deterministic process at work.

To isolate and abstract an electron from its relationship in that whole, and then come to certain conclusions on the basis of the difficulty of following it in its abstracted state, throws no significant light on the nature of the whole or the determining process underlying it. The attempt of the indeterminists to banish determinism by seeing "difficulties" with every isolated electron and the attempt of th mechanical materialists to banish "impure" statistical laws in the interests of the ideal of a uniquely and completely determined electron in every case, are both one-sided. From different angles they each suffer from an inability to distinguish between different levels of investigation and to judge each in its own terms (a mechanical particle, a sub-atomic whole, etc.).

Even more illegitimate than the attempt of the indeterminists to banish causality from the world has been their attempt, again using the theory of indeterminacy as touchstone, to deny the objectivity of the physical attributes of matter (*i.e.* position—velocity, etc.), a basic postulate of scientific materialism. A clear and representative statement in this direction is the one by Professor Bridgman:

"A body has position only insofar as its position can be measured; if its position cannot in principle be measured, the concept of position applied to the body is meaningless, or in other words, a position of the body does not exist. . . . To carry the paradox one step further, by choosing whether I shall measure the position or velocity of the electron, I thereby determine whether the electron has position or velocity. The physical properties of the electron are not absolutely inherent in it but involve also the choice of the observer."

The central fallacy in Bridgman's position lies in making susceptibility to precise measurement the criterion of objective existence. As has already been indicated, the difficulty in precise measurement has an objective root in matters outside of the will or consciousness of the human observer. The particle is there, and has position and velocity. The errors accruing in the attempt to determine both simultaneously come as an objective consequence of the nature of measurement of a moving electron, and has nothing to do with what the human observer feels, thinks or desires. Disregarding this objective basis of explanation, Bridgman assumes what remains to be proven, and in line with his idealist predilections does a neat sleight-of-hand act, doing away first with the position and then with the velocity of the electron. It is an echo of the same idealism that has been repeatedly refuted.

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VII. **NOTES**

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